831

The CITY'S APPEARANCE

EVANSVILLE INDIANA

KESSLER PLAN ASSOCIATION

The Third
of a series of
City Planning Studies

Suggestions for Improving

The City's Appearance

Evansville, Indiana

ISSUED BY
THE CITY PLAN COMMISSION
1927

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW AND ASSOCIATES
City Plan Engineers
E. O. MILLS L. D. TILTON
Associates

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CITY OF EVANSVILLE

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The City's Appearance

Order throughout the city's physical structure brings improvement in the city's appearance. An Evansville developing in accordance with a studied street plan, an effective transit plan, a unified recreation plan, a scientific zoning plan, and so on, will be growing always more and more attractive. It will draw people to it. Its residents will be proud of it. It will win a name among American municipalities.

Yet there are other, more definite ways by which attractiveness can be deliberately created. This is partly a public, partly a private responsibility. Citizens of Evansville must decide whether they want an attractive city. If they do, then forceful, positive support must be given every movement or action which affects the outlook from windows or streets. Why endure the constant sight of ugliness when more pleasing things may be had merely by the exercise of foresight and good taste?

If the ways by which more agreeable surroundings may be produced are analyzed, it will be found that an attractive city depends largely on (1) attractive streets, and (2) attractive buildings and grounds and parks and other open spaces, i. e., whatever is seen from the streets. The appearance of the streets themselves and of the parks and other open spaces is largely in the hands of the city government or subject to their guidance. The appearance of buildings and grounds, on the other hand, is partly in public but largely in private control. Of course, hard and fast lines cannot be drawn here. The classification is arbitrary and of use only for the purpose of analyzing the subject under discussion. The aim of this study is to formulate a program for the improvement of the looks of Evansville.

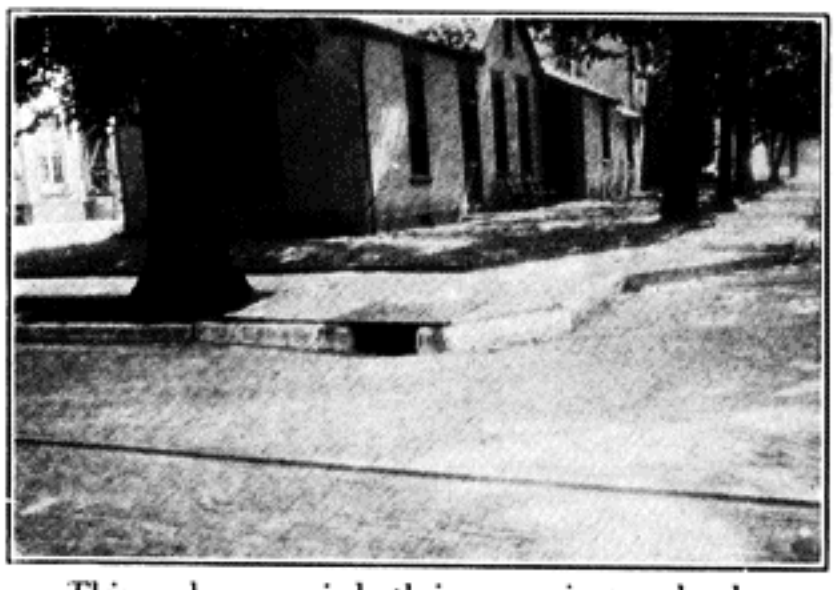
STREETS AND ALLEYS

What is it that makes streets attractive? In the first place, they must be kept clean. This function of the municipal government is so well recognized that it need not be dwelt upon here. Evansville has long since established a good street cleaning service. The public should be encouraged to take more responsibility for keeping the streets and parks clean, and nothing would do more good along this line than the placing of waste paper receptacles of good appearance along the streets and more freely than at present through the parks in places that are convenient but not too conspicuous.

Greater respect on the part of the public for the appearance of alleys is a real necessity. Keeping alleys clean is as much the duty of the residents themselves as it is that of the city. Dirty, neglected alleys are often found in Evansville, giving an unpleasant impression of the city.

STREET DESIGN

The design of streets has a notable bearing upon the city's appearance. A narrow street where a wide one belongs is obviously a mistake. A broad expanse of pavement on a purely local residential street robs the neighborhood of the restful, homelike character that appeals to the



This curb corner is both inconvenient and ugly.

A well-rounded corner like this helps traffic and is pleasing to the eye.

This saw-tooth arrangement of houses, due to poor land subdivision, spoils the appearance of the street and reduces the usefulness of the lots.

STREET DESIGN *(Continued)*

average homeowner. The proper proportioning of streets, so that roadways will be wide enough on major streets, and all grass and tree space will not be absorbed by pavement on residential streets is a matter which should be carefully controlled by adherence to a functional street plan.

STREET CURBS AND CURVES

Street intersections also deserve notice. Where two streets intersect at a sharp angle, the corner should be well-rounded. A radius of at least fifteen feet at the curb line is needed for this purpose. This may mean putting a curve on the property line at the corner, a plan to be followed generally when new subdivisions are laid out. The object is mainly safety, but appearance gains, too. Sharp curb corners at present spoil the looks of many street intersections in Evansville.

Sometimes where more than two streets intersect at or near the same point, or where a slight jog occurs in one of two intersecting streets, carefully enlarging the intersection will make it safer and will make it at the same time, much more interesting and attractive. Forethought exercised along this line when land is subdivided results usually not only in added safety and attractiveness for the public, but better property values adjacent to the corner which is given individual treatment.

Street alignment, too, is worthy of note in this connection. This really goes back again to the platting of the land. In Evansville, wherever it has been necessary to change the direction of a street, it has been customary in the past to introduce an angle in the street, taking up all the change of direction at one point. Far more street attractiveness as well as better shaped lots and greater traffic safety would usually have been produced in residential sections if long radius curves had been used in place of angles.

When parkways or boulevards are laid out, special interest in the street view may be secured without expense by the deliberate introduction of occasional long curves even where the contour of the land does not demand a change of direction. Such curves are more adapted to the flow of motors, and are consequently more satisfying than angles. There are wonderful possibilities, moreover, practically untouched as yet in Evansville, in the use of curved streets for local residential use. On hilly land they are absolutely necessary as a practical matter; on land less rough, too, curved streets here and there throughout the city undoubtedly increase its attractiveness.

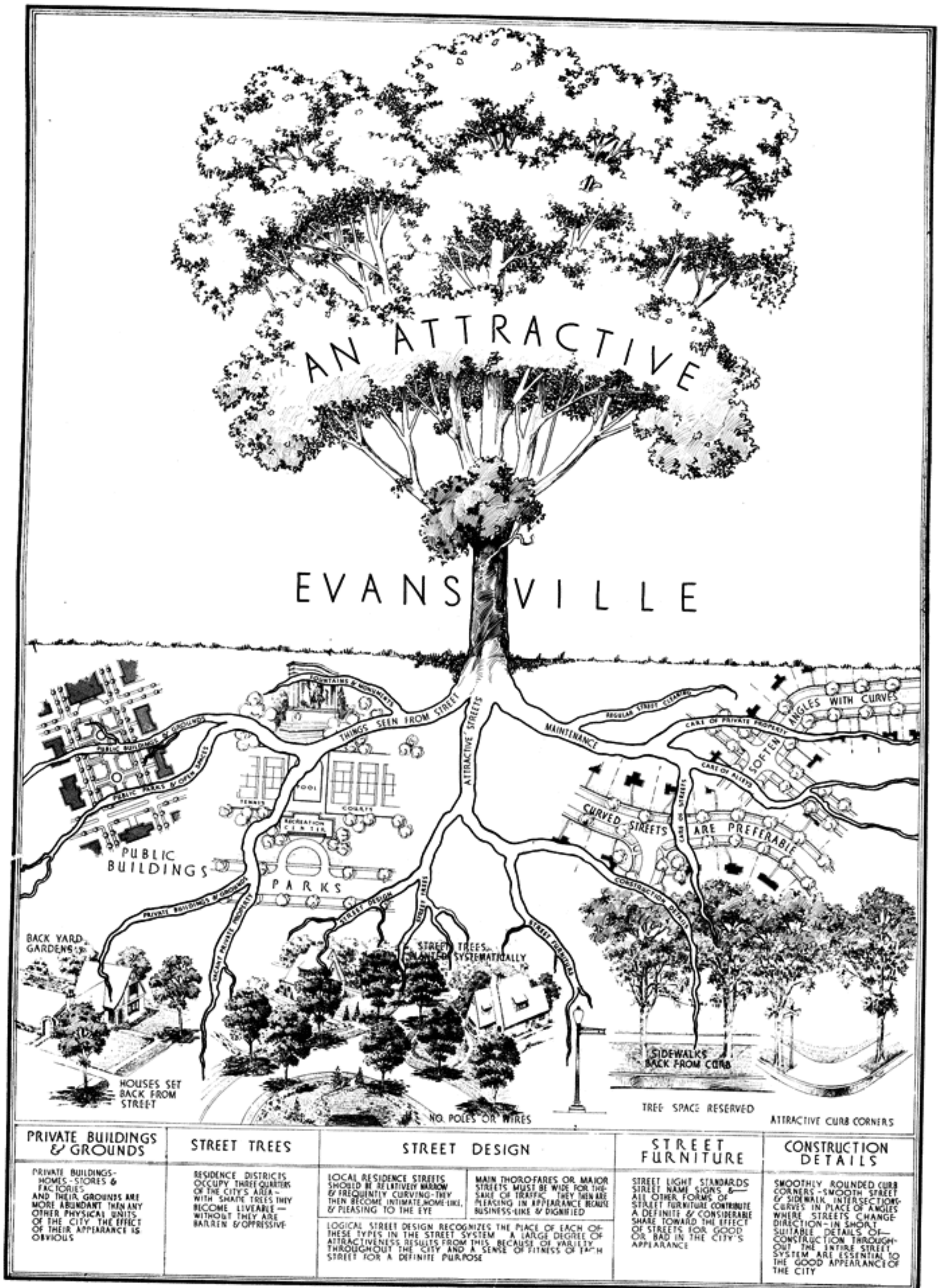


PLATE 1. In this diagram the city is likened to a beautiful tree. The beauty of a tree depends largely upon healthy roots and proper nourishment. Street design, street trees, buildings and grounds are among the basic elements on which the beauty of the city depends.

SIDEWALK OBSTRUCTIONS

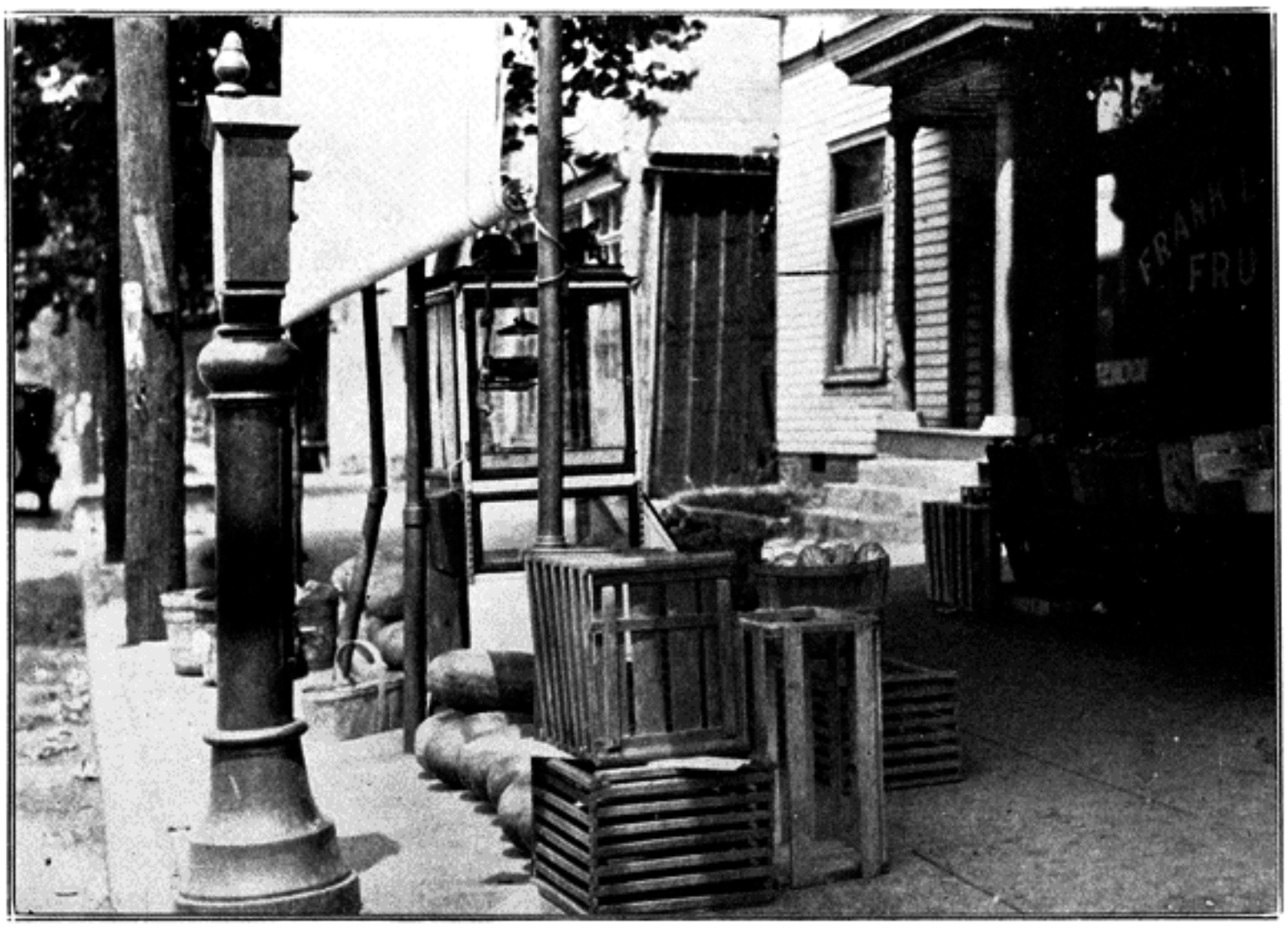
From the standpoint of the pedestrians' rights and also for the sake of appearance, sidewalks should be free from obstructions. Loading and unloading of goods temporarily on the sidewalk is usually not very objectionable. The use of sidewalk space for storage or for show cases or advertising matter calls for police action. Evansville has had little trouble from this source, compared with other cities, but conditions on Fourth Street near Main and on some other streets require attention, and constant watch needs to be kept to prevent new trouble of this sort.

The sidewalk canopy supported by iron posts is a device now outgrown in most modern cities. There are still a good many of these ugly affairs scattered through Evansville, however, and the sooner they can be removed from the sidewalks the better.

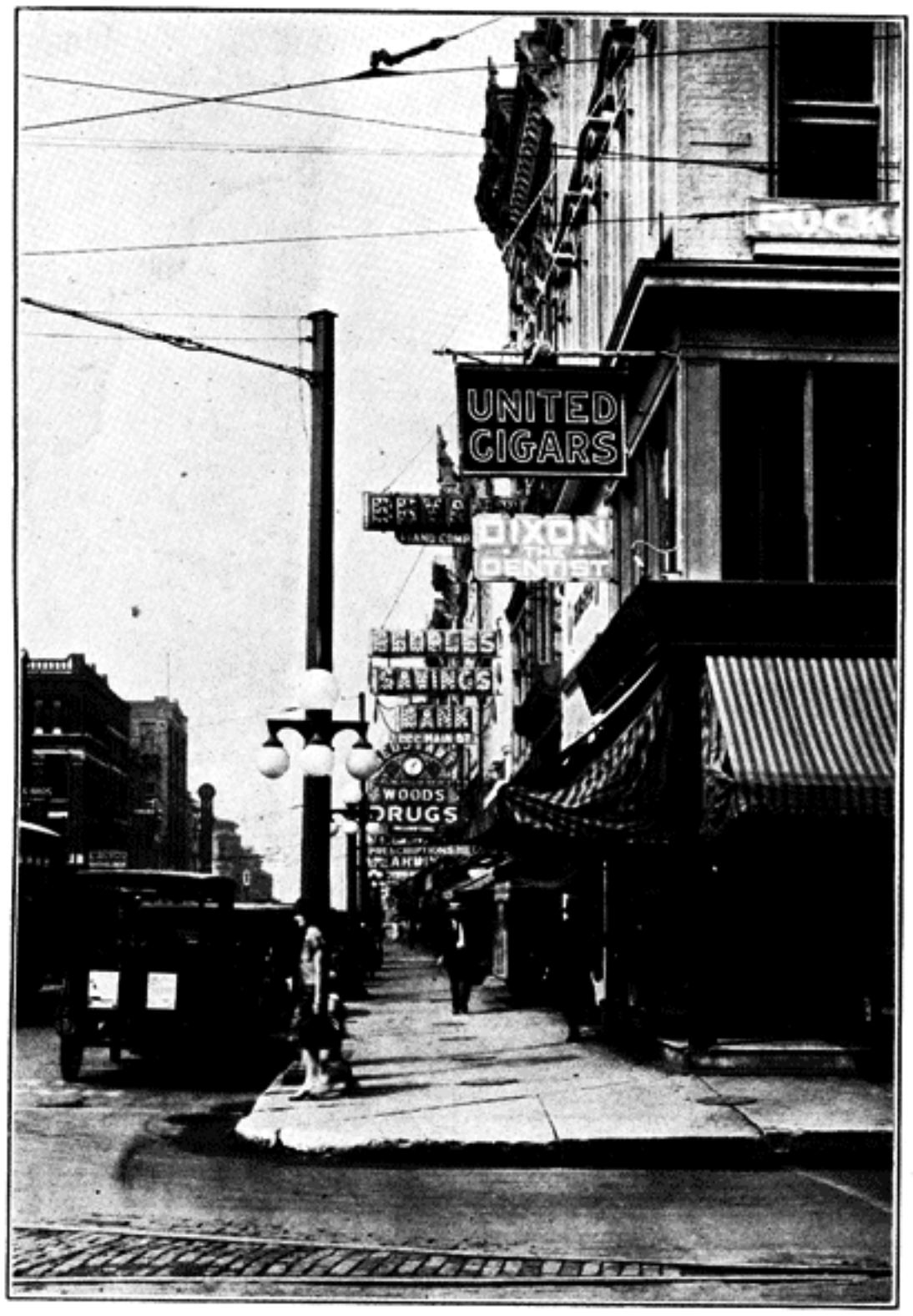
The curb pump for gasoline is another sidewalk obstruction which has become a nuisance in Evansville. Prohibition of new curb pumps has been in effect, however, three years under the Building Code. There should be a Council order to require the removal of those pumps which were erected prior to the passage of the Code. A period of grace of one or two years could be granted, but some provision should be made to get these devices off the highways of the city.

OVERHANGING SIGNS

The uncontrolled use of signs hanging out over the sidewalk mars the appearance of Main Street and other streets of the business district to a considerable extent. In the interest of public safety the Building Code has restricted the use of overhanging signs chiefly to ones made of metal, but has not attempted to limit the amount of projection of signs over the sidewalk, except in the case of wooden signs. A projection of five feet is allowed even with these. There will be a material gain in the dignity of the business section when no signs are permitted to extend beyond a reasonable distance from the building. Eighteen inches is generally considered sufficient.



Abuse of sidewalk space.



The use of many large overhanging signs is marring the appearance of the main business streets and at the same time reducing the effectiveness of this form of advertising.

BILLBOARDS

Billboards are conspicuously objectionable at various places in the city—such as at the dump on Riverside Avenue, a place which is a disgraceful sight even without the boards, and at Morgan Avenue and Main Street, opposite the principal entrance to Garvin Park.

Under the Zone Ordinance, billboards are no longer permitted in districts restricted to residential use. The gain to residential property in salable value as well as in liveableness is no small item. Preserving and protecting the appearance of residential areas throughout the city constitutes a valuable contribution from the Zoning Plan.

POLES AND WIRES

The city does not have direct charge of the placing of poles and wires for electric lights and telephones, but it has an interest in them because of their relationship to the city's outward as-

pect. For the most part Evansville's present appearance bears witness to the fact that these necessary but ugly features have been put in the alleys wherever possible. This is a creditable showing. Wherever poles and overhead wires still remain on the streets of the city, they should be removed in time to the alley or along the rear lot lines. Along major streets wires should eventually be placed in underground conduits as fast as the work can be financed. The removal of these overhead wires will permit a better growth of trees and thus in more ways than one will greatly benefit the city's appearance.

STREET LIGHTS

The outlook at night depends to an appreciable extent on the effectiveness of the city's lighting system. This matter has received some attention in Evansville. The system of cluster lights in the central business district makes only a slightly favorable impression on the visitor. This type of light is now obsolete. It is not as attractive as single light standards nor as efficient in illumination. The design of light standards has a notable effect on the city's appearance in the daytime as well as at night. The adoption of uniform types of light standards for the entire city is recommended. One light should be for use on main business streets, another on secondary business streets and outlying major streets, another on boulevards, and another on local residence streets. These should be simple, graceful and adapted to the use to which they are put. No single major operation could do as much to change and improve the looks of Evansville as the introduction of a complete modern system of street lighting.

STREET SIGNS

Evansville is on the point of placing street name signs systematically throughout the city. In supplying this urgent need, it is essential that great care be used in the selection of the signs. A type of sign should be selected which will not only serve the convenience of the public and fulfill the requirements of durability but will also stand as evidence of a certain pride in the appearance of the city. Signs should all be so placed as to be easily seen by both motorists and pedestrians, by day and night. Moreover, they should have similar locations at every street intersection as a matter of convenience to the public in readily finding them. A plain enameled sign or one equally durable which will not rust and which can be placed on special poles or supported otherwise close to the sidewalk intersection is to be preferred to novelties or less durable types. In the same way, if to a lesser degree, the use of signs showing traffic directions should contribute their share in the pleasing appearance of the city.

Billboards quickly spoil the appearance of a residential neighborhood and depreciate property values.

Sidewalk canopies such as this injure the city's appearance.

Simply tree butchery!

SIDEWALKS AT THE CURB

Sidewalks placed at the curb are injuring the looks of many of the newer residential streets of Evansville. One has only to compare the older portions of such streets as Chandler Avenue, Powell Avenue, and Mulberry Street with almost any of the streets developed in recent years to be impressed at once with the attractiveness of the former and the relative barrenness of the latter. This is a matter of planting strips and street trees. Space does not here permit going into detail regarding the various practical reasons, aside from appearance, which call for a return to the custom of placing sidewalks close to the property line of the street and separating it from the roadway by means of an ample planting strip with grass and trees. These points have already been discussed in the pamphlet entitled "A System of Major Streets for Evansville." It may be said here, however, that no city that is giving serious thought to standards of attractiveness is approving sidewalks at the curb.

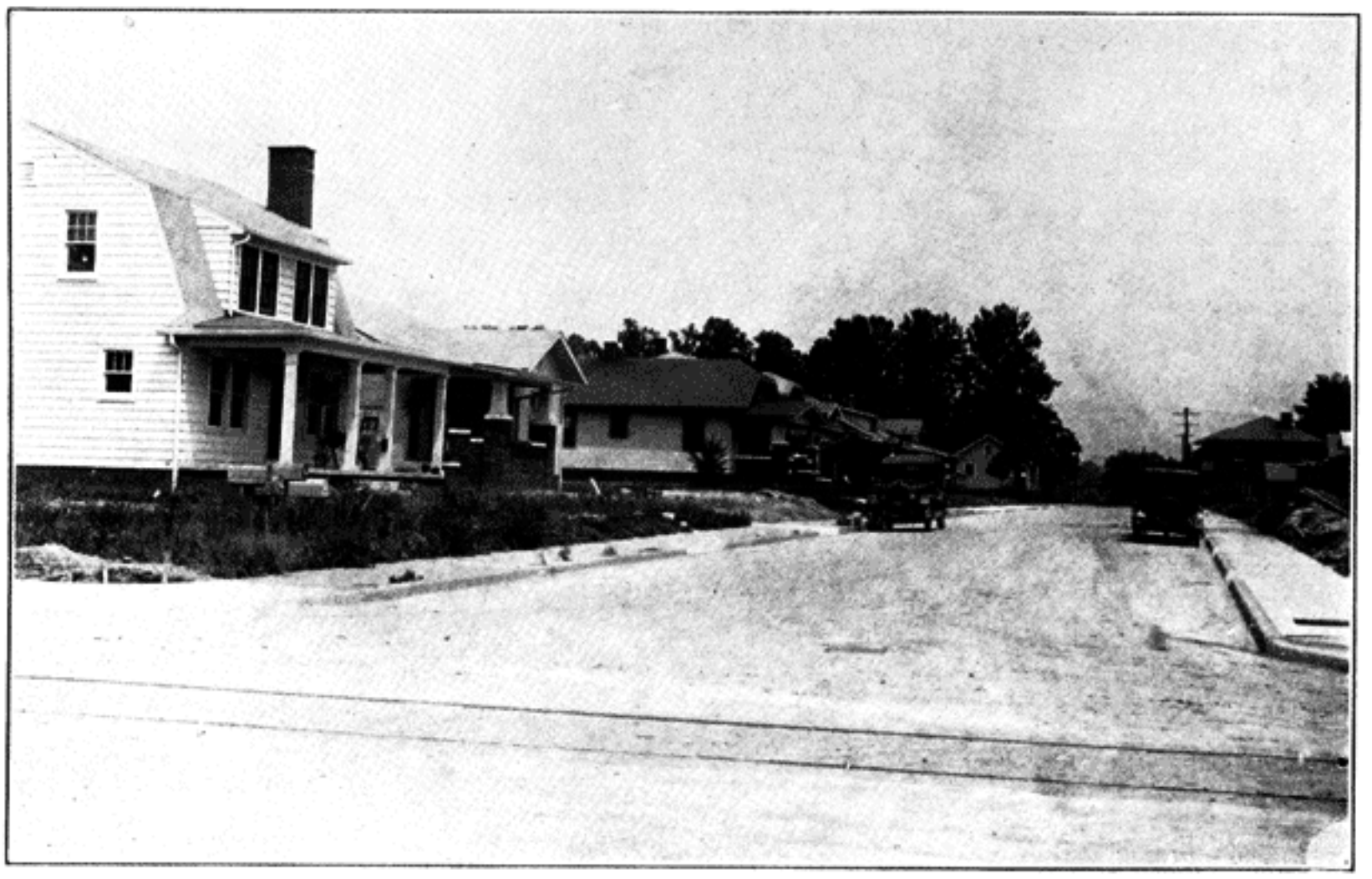
STREET TREES

No residential street is complete without shade trees. There can be no question of this when the summer heat is taken into account. On the basis of comfort alone the planting of street trees throughout the city should be considered as a public necessity. Trees should be required and planting should be carried out by the city at the property owners' expense on the same basis as the paving of streets and alleys and the laying of sidewalks.

Even those street trees which the city now has are subject to annual devastations of "tree butchers," who go about collecting money for hacking away all the branches and the tops of beautiful trees for unsuspecting property owners whom they tell that this butchery is necessary for the proper growth of the trees. It is not generally known that a city ordinance (No. 1032) passed in 1919, makes it unlawful to "plant, trim, cut, spray, or remove" any tree in a public street or other public ground without first procuring a written permit from the Park Department. Such permits are issued free of charge to persons qualified to do trimming, cutting, and other work on trees. They constitute the public's protection against tree butchery.

Many cities, through their park department or a separate forestry department, carry on a systematic planting and maintenance of street trees. The Park Department here can render a distinct service by undertaking a definite tree planting program for the city streets and employing a forester who can give his undivided attention to promoting the planting and proper care of street trees.

Evansville needs many more street trees, planted with regard for (1) practical considerations of resistance to diseases and insect pests, adaptability to food and water supply available on city streets, and amount of shade given, and (2) aesthetic considerations of uniformity of appearance along the street, proper spacing of trees to avoid crowding, and variety of types throughout the city.



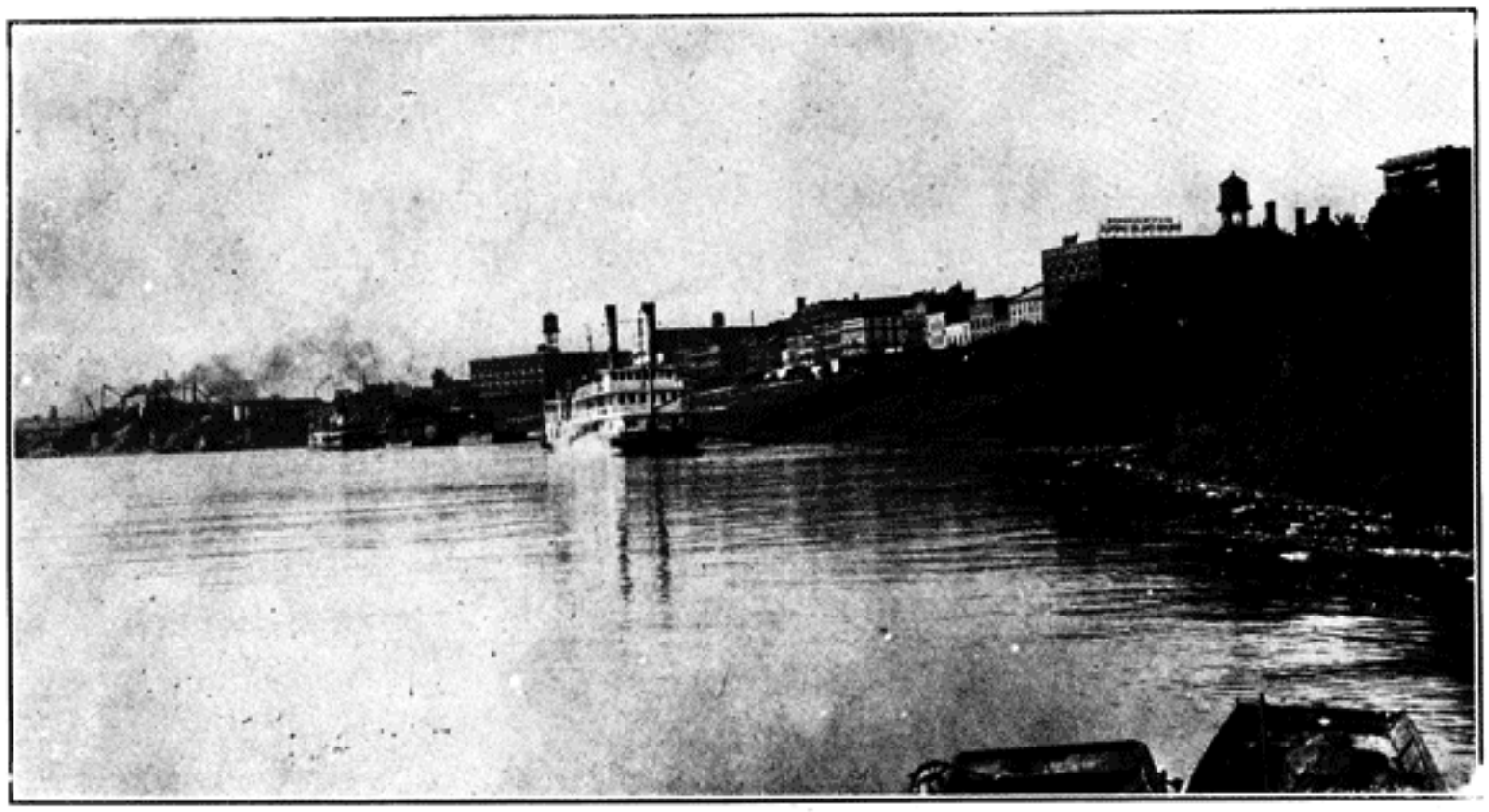
A street like this does not make a proper contribution to beauty and comfort.

A street like this is characteristic of the older Evansville.

WATER FRONT

Though a portion of Evansville's waterfront has been developed into a rather attractive park, it has scarcely yet begun to come into its own. For three blocks along the river a broad expanse of paving stone adjacent to the heart of the city serves merely to provide a landing place for an occasional packet boat, and then for four more blocks down stream the riverbank is filled with a succession of cattlepens, sand and gravel piles, storerooms and elevated tracks—all view of the river from Water Street being shut off along here.

Plate 13 opposite gives a suggestion for the construction of more permanent works along the river in the central part of the city. This scheme, as may be seen, provides for an elevated parking plaza for automobiles on the present wharf and a system of sea walls along Sunset Park. These works will not only increase the usefulness of the wharf area but will add greatly to the attractiveness and value of Sunset Park. Order and neatness should be a distinct note in the development of this water gate to the city. The wharf and park at present seem to be unfinished and are not developed in a manner commensurate with their importance to the city.



The need of a marginal wall and promenade along the river is clearly shown here.

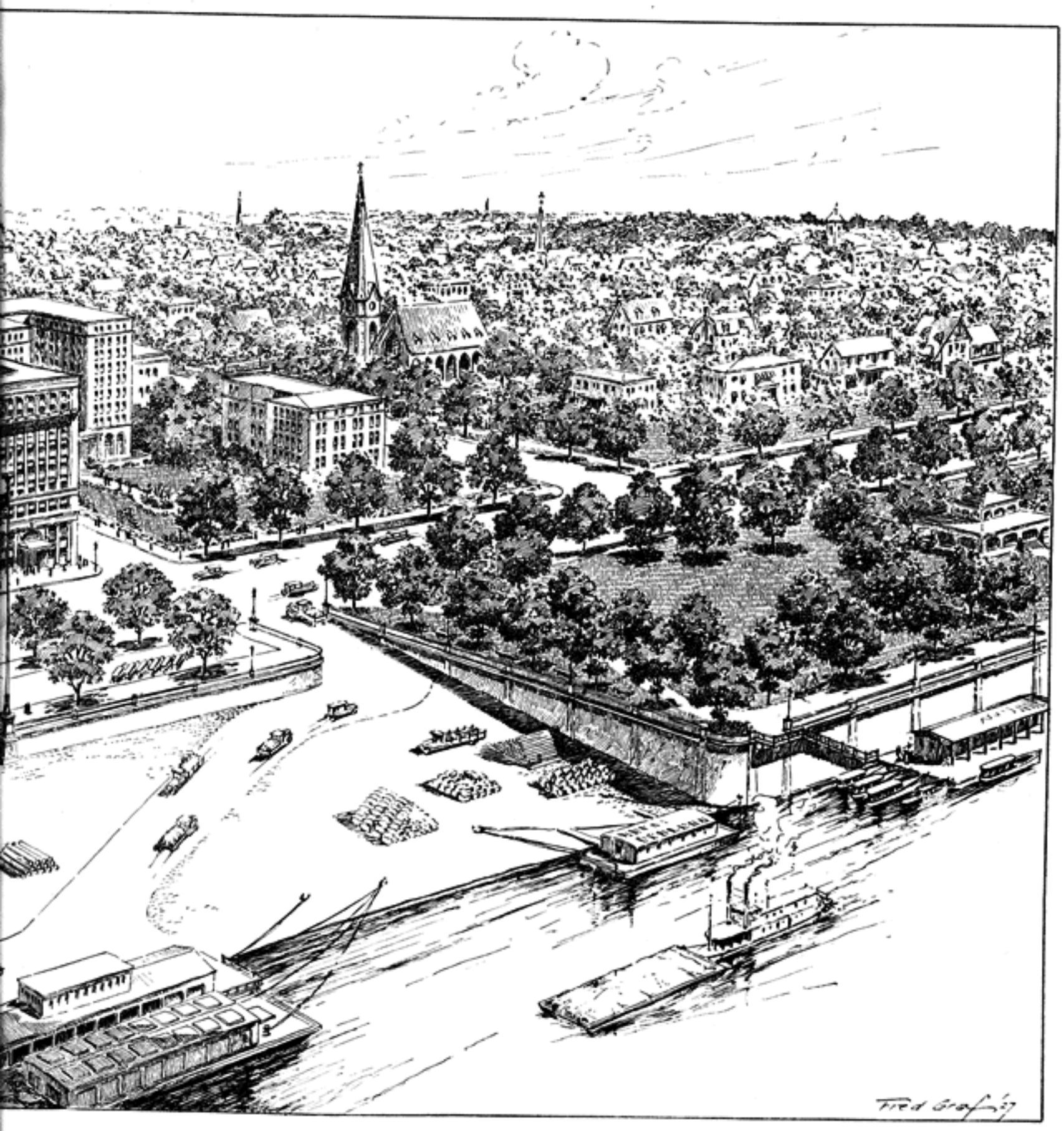
PARKS

Public parks take a prominent place among those things that contribute attractiveness to Evansville. Few visitors will fail to be impressed by the tree-shaded lawns and broad river panorama at Sunset Park, the wooded walks of Bayard Park, the delightfully arranged succession of sunny and shaded slopes and quiet ponds at Garvin Park, or the restful groves at Mesker Park. These and other beauties are at hand for the enjoyment of the public, and are among the city's most prized assets.

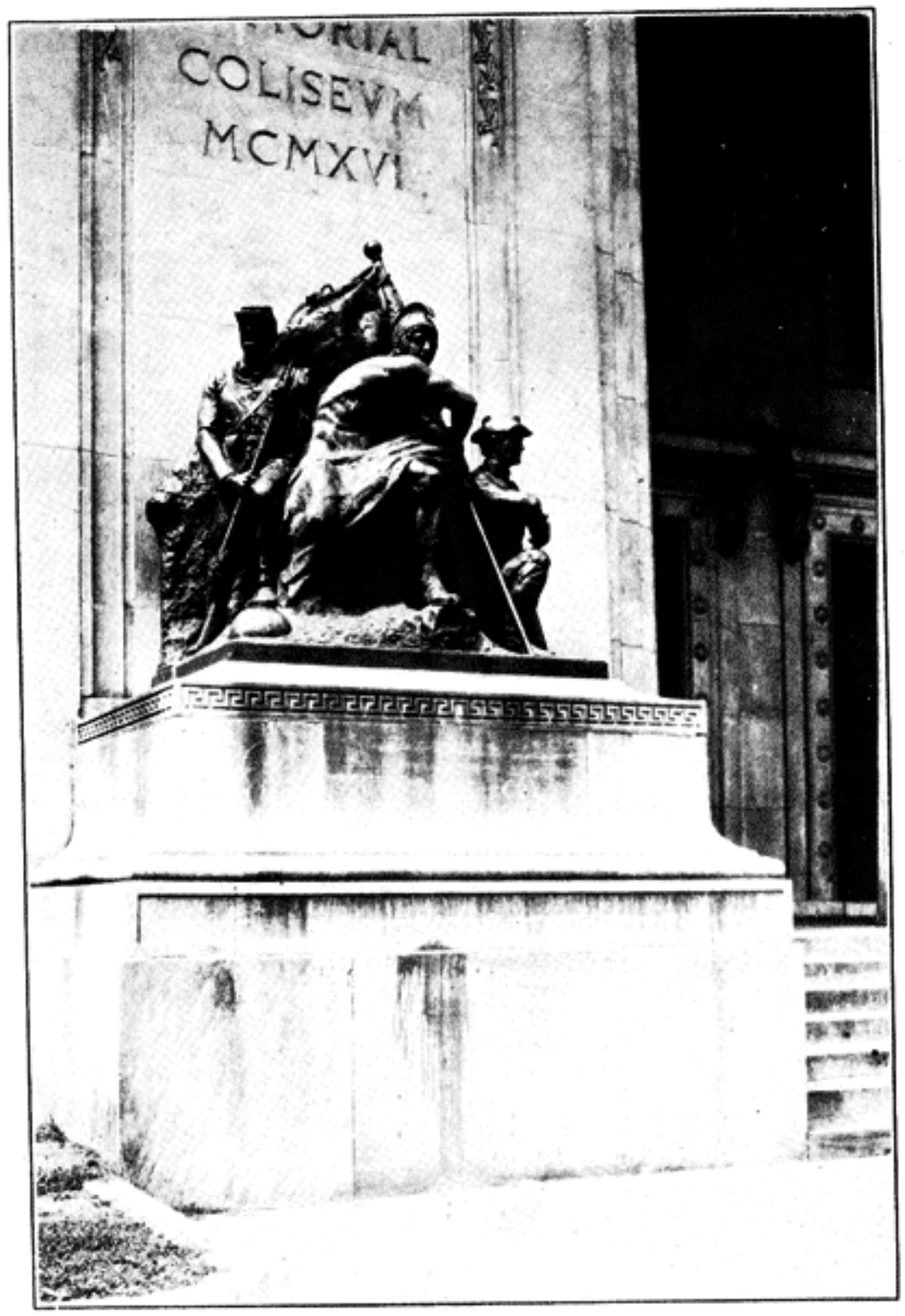
Much remains to be done, however, in park construction. Some parts of the city are without parks; some have parks that are not properly developed for their best use. New areas are being opened up to residential use and all will need parks. In order that the greatest good may come from its parks, Evansville must see that they are not only properly distributed to serve all sections alike, but are also made accessible by means of boulevards and parkways and designed and built with proper landscape skill. Sunset Park especially, because of its important location and its exceptionally wide use, needs improvements of a more permanent character.

A very bad impression of the city is made upon visitors by the unsightly dumps on Riverside Avenue near First Street and by what is commonly known as the "auto graveyard." Riverside Avenue has been recommended on the City Plan as a part of the proposed boulevard system, linking Sunset Park with residential districts farther east, then by means of a parkway along Pigeon Creek, with Garvin and Mesker Parks. It is urged that as early action as possible be

PLATE 2. A public plaza built out over the upper portion of the paved wharf would help to solve the parking problem in the central business district. If carried out as suggested above, this plaza would extend three blocks along the river, from Vine Street to Walnut Street,



and would provide an attractive promenade shaded by trees, bordered with balustrade and modern street lights, and commanding an excellent view up and down the river. It would make a notable improvement in the appearance of the river front.



taken on the construction of that portion of this proposed boulevard which will continue the line of Riverside Avenue southeast in the vicinity of Howard Street. This is the logical way of eliminating that disgraceful eyesore of the city which has on display hundreds of decrepit automobiles, for opening of the boulevard extension would make it more profitable to use the abutting land for nice residences than for the storage of old wornout cars. As for the dump above referred to, the appearance of this ugly stretch would be immeasurably improved by the confining of dumping to one or two definite points at a time and covering all the rest of the dump with orchard grass or some other easily raised ground cover.

MONUMENTS

Evansville is peculiarly lacking in public monuments. Outside of the simple stone memorial to Captain Dexter at the foot of Main Street and the monument to Joseph Copello which provides the Main Street entrance to Garvin Park with an interesting vista of the flag, the city has little to show in the way of monuments.

The groups on the Soldiers'-and-Sailors' Memorial Coliseum suggest the need of more good sculpture. These are all that Evansville now has.

Sooner or later Evansville surely will erect various monuments and memorials. The project now on foot, to place artistic markers at the chief points of historic interest in Evansville, is one which promises to enhance the city's appearance considerably. Whenever any monuments are erected, now or later, they should certainly not only be designed with great artistic care and be given the benefit of appropriate planting; they should also be carefully located for greatest effectiveness, as for example, at points where they will terminate street vistas or path vistas in a park.

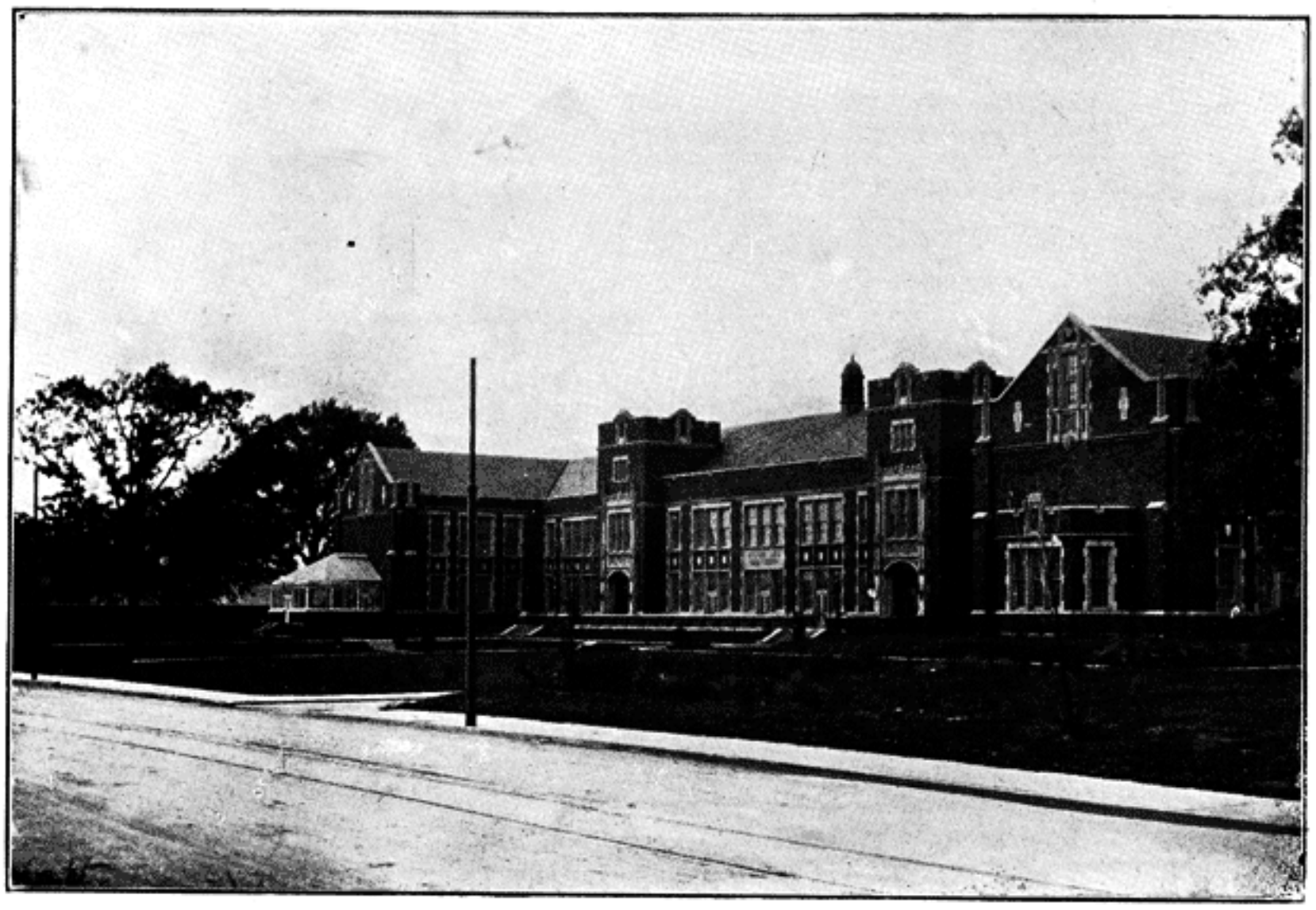
A good site for a future memorial will be on the north side of Sunset Park on the axis of Oak Street, which is recommended in the report on "A System of Recreation Facilities for Evansville" as a boulevard connection to the park, and which would thereby gain an interesting vista point. If a civic center plan, such as suggested elsewhere in this report, should be carried out, a monument might be appropriate in front of the central building of the group. This building and the monument would then serve together to terminate the boulevard vista. Another good site will be in the small park proposed at the intersection of Canal Street and Lincoln Avenue, where Oak Street and Lincoln Avenue join as a future boulevard. In this little park on the axis of Lincoln Avenue there will be a splendid opportunity for a fine monument.

VACANT LOTS

Vacant lots are scattered more or less through every city. There is a tendency for these spots to be neglected by their owners, who often live at a distance from the city and who perhaps have no agent to assume responsibility for their upkeep. In Evansville, if the weeds are not cut by the owners of such lots, the city undertakes to do so, and charges the owner for the labor involved. This serves to protect the lawns nearby, for seeds from the weeds of one vacant lot could in one season ruin the lawns of a whole neighborhood. The care of vacant lots thus constitutes an important factor in the city's appearance. Citizens should cooperate further and discourage all attempts to use these vacant areas as community waste baskets for the piling up of paper, tin cans, bottles, and so forth. Such practices injure the good reputation of the city. Recently the Boy Scouts have done notable work in helping to clean up such areas and make the city more presentable.

BRIDGES

It is hardly necessary to point out the fine opportunity to improve the city's appearance by the construction of well designed bridges. Evansville has a number of ugly, old-fashioned bridges. As these wear out and have to be replaced, the new bridges should be a credit to the city. This does not mean elaborate and expensive ornaments and decorations but merely proper attention to proportion and general effect. Concrete bridges over Pigeon Creek will materially improve the appearance of this stream. In the building of the new bridge soon to be erected to span the Ohio River there lies an excellent opportuntiy to make a structure that Evansville can well be proud of.



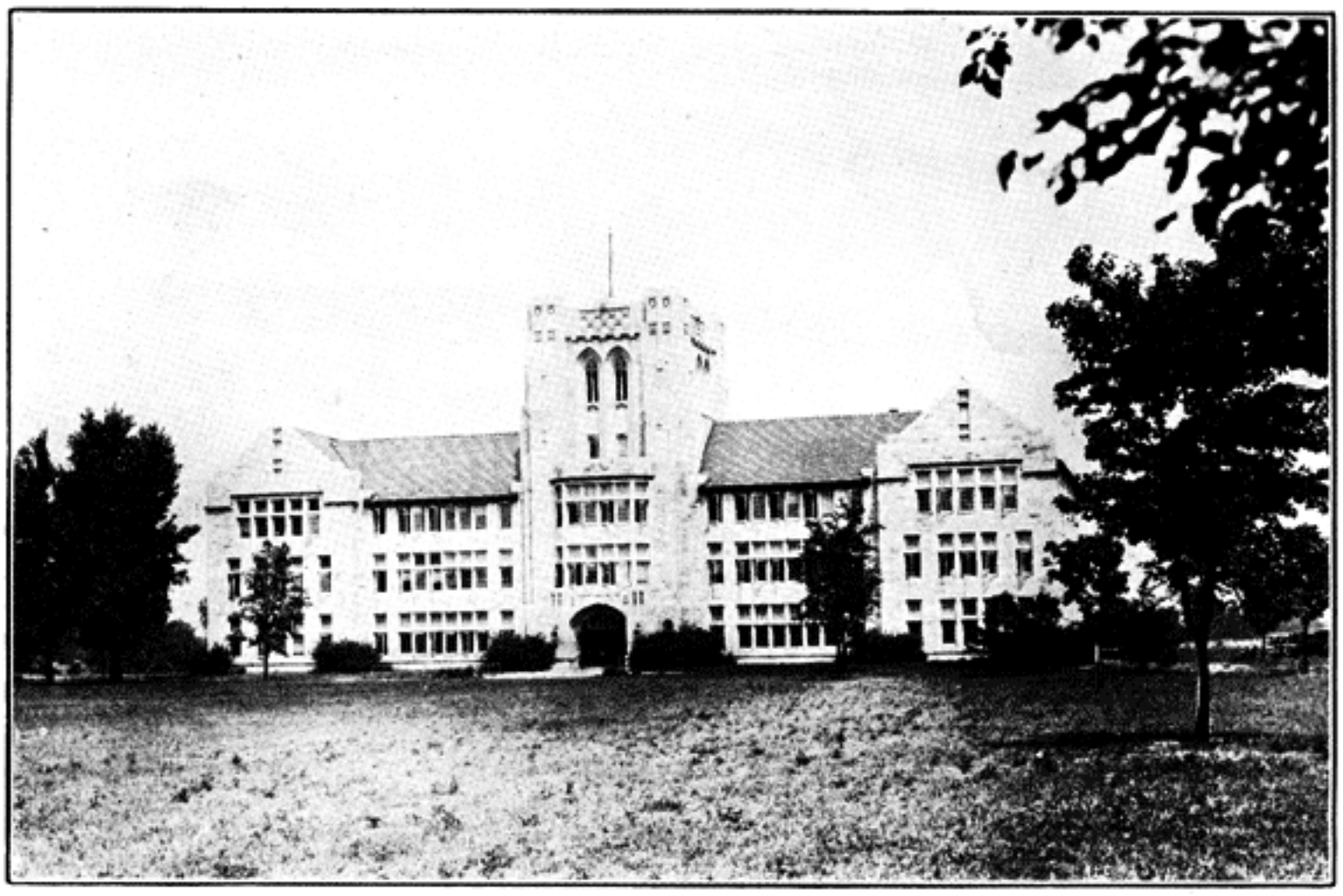
Benjamin Bosse High School, Washington Avenue.

West Side Carnegie Library, W. Franklin Street.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

So far the responsibility of the city authorities for the appearance of the city has been pointed out in connection with the development and care of streets, parks, and other open spaces. The city has a further responsibility in the matter of providing attractive public buildings and grounds. A beautiful design must be given the building itself, and an appropriate setting provided for it. Adequate space and suitable planting are necessary elements of the setting. Where possible, it is a good idea to locate a fine public building where it will terminate a street vista.

In the two public high schools built for Evansville within the last few years the city has acquired buildings which are a distinct credit to the city. Francis Joseph Reitz High School is a beautiful building, and its hilltop setting is unsurpassed. By removing a portion of the hilltop east of the school the splendid river panorama can be made visible to the lower rooms of the building, and the view of the school itself from Sunset Park greatly improved. The new Benjamin Bosse High School, with its trees and lawns and playfield units spread out on a level site, contrasts strongly with the picturesque high school on the hill, but gives to the eastern section of the city a splendid architectural feature. Mention should certainly be made also of the Catholic High School, notable both for its fine building and for its attractive grounds. Among municipal buildings the Carnegie Library on West Franklin Street ranks high. The city has here an attractive building in a beautiful natural setting of lawn and trees.



Evansville College—one of the city's most beautiful buildings.

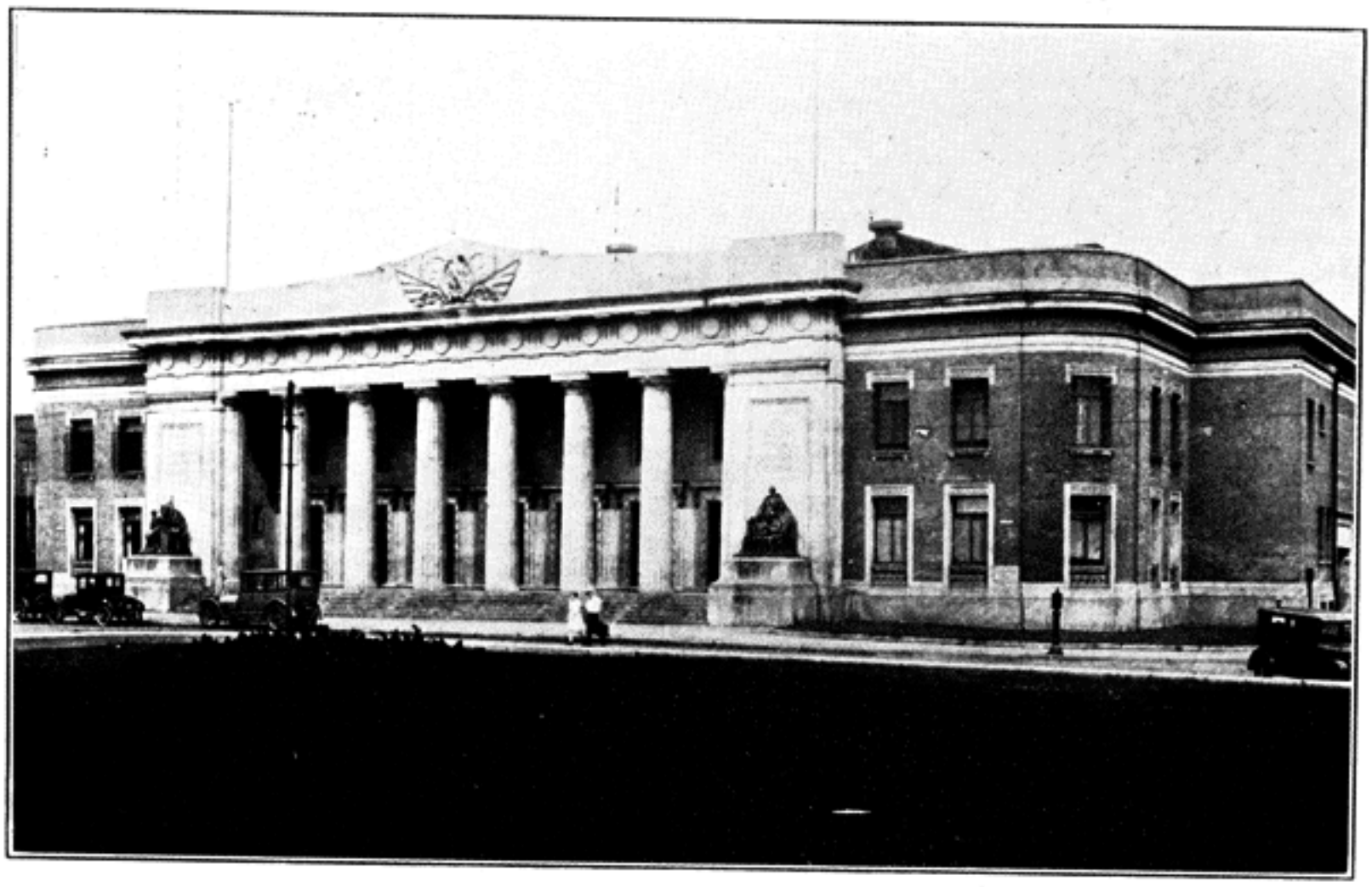
PUBLIC BUILDINGS *(Continued)*

The Coliseum, with its dignified portico of Doric columns and its excellent architecture throughout, is a noteworthy memorial. Its effectiveness, however, is tremendously reduced by the inadequacy of its site. The building is crowded on half of a small block, and provided with no foreground of lawn or enframement of trees and shrubbery. Its termination of the view on Fourth Street would be ideal if the approach to the building were really adequate. It is obvious that the buildings on Fourth Street from the church at the corner of Vine Street to the corner filling station at Division Street stand in the way of a good view of this fine memorial. The buildings that block this view also stand in the way of making a much-needed street connection between Fourth Street and Second Avenue for the double purpose of public safety and easier traffic circulation. This connection and a similar one to First Avenue across a portion of the present Court House lawn should be carried out at as early a date as possible. A small triangular park between the two cutoffs will then give the building a foreground more in keeping with the excellent architecture of this memorial.

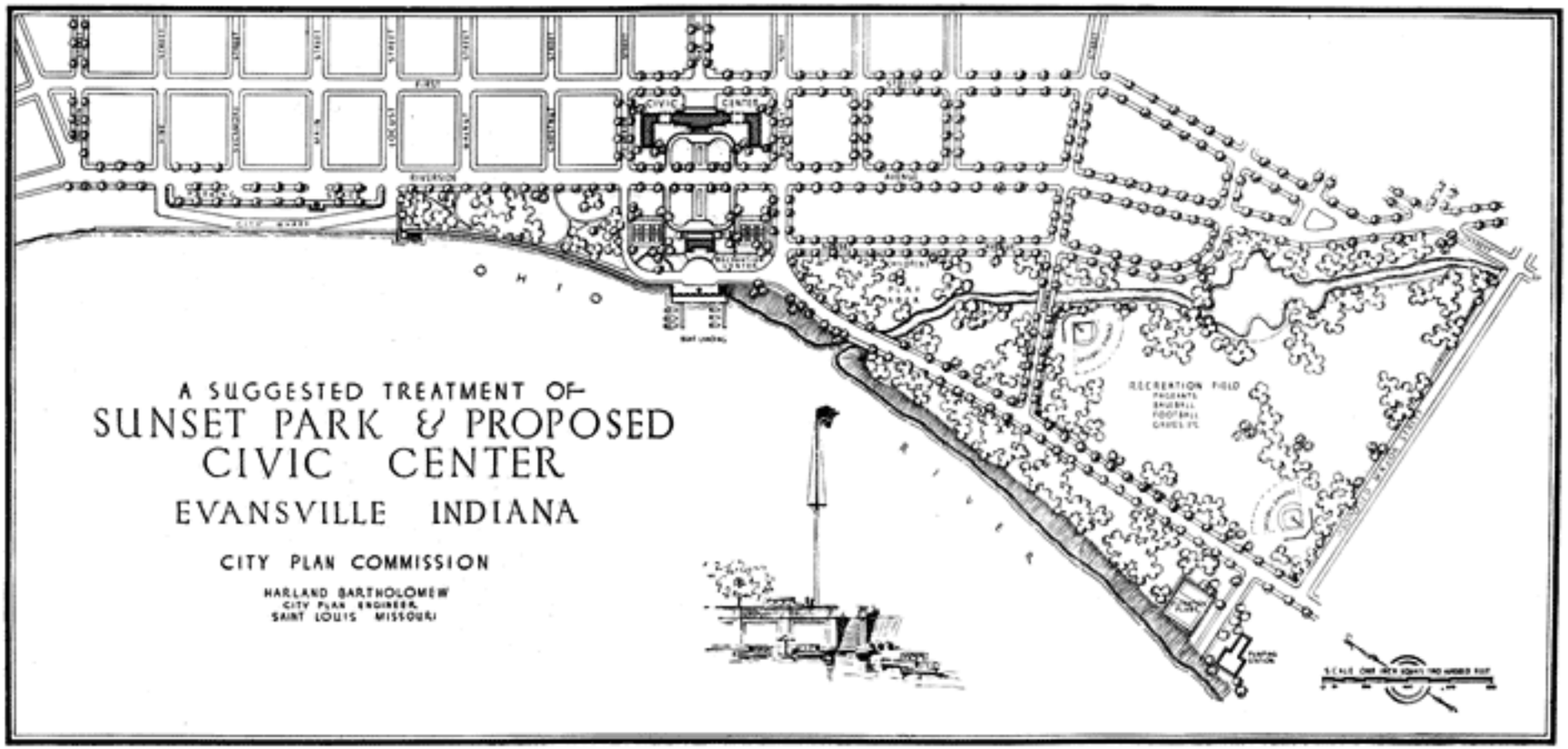
A good many other public and semi-public buildings of Evansville suffer as does the Coliseum, from being crowded into a space too small. This is especially true of Central High School and the City Hall. It is true also of the homes of the various fraternal orders. Some of these have splendid buildings, but they need foregrounds, the enframement of trees, and the sense of freedom coming from space about the building. Most of the churches of the city suffer also from the same cause. There are numerous interesting church buildings in Evansville, but very few have the distinction of a commanding site or of ample grounds attractively developed with planting.

Among the city's public and semi-public buildings, Evansville College is regarded by many as the most attractive building in the city. In proportion and in detail it is certainly a building to which citizens can point with just pride. A far-sighted plan has been made which looks to the time when not one building but many will be needed, and this will be the central one of a group of buildings which will some day be an architectural triumph for Evansville. Planting is gradually being carried out on the College grounds in keeping with the eventual campus plan, and it is only a matter of time when Evansville College and its grounds will become one of the main show places of the city.

The Memorial Coliseum—a good terminal feature with an entirely inadequate setting.

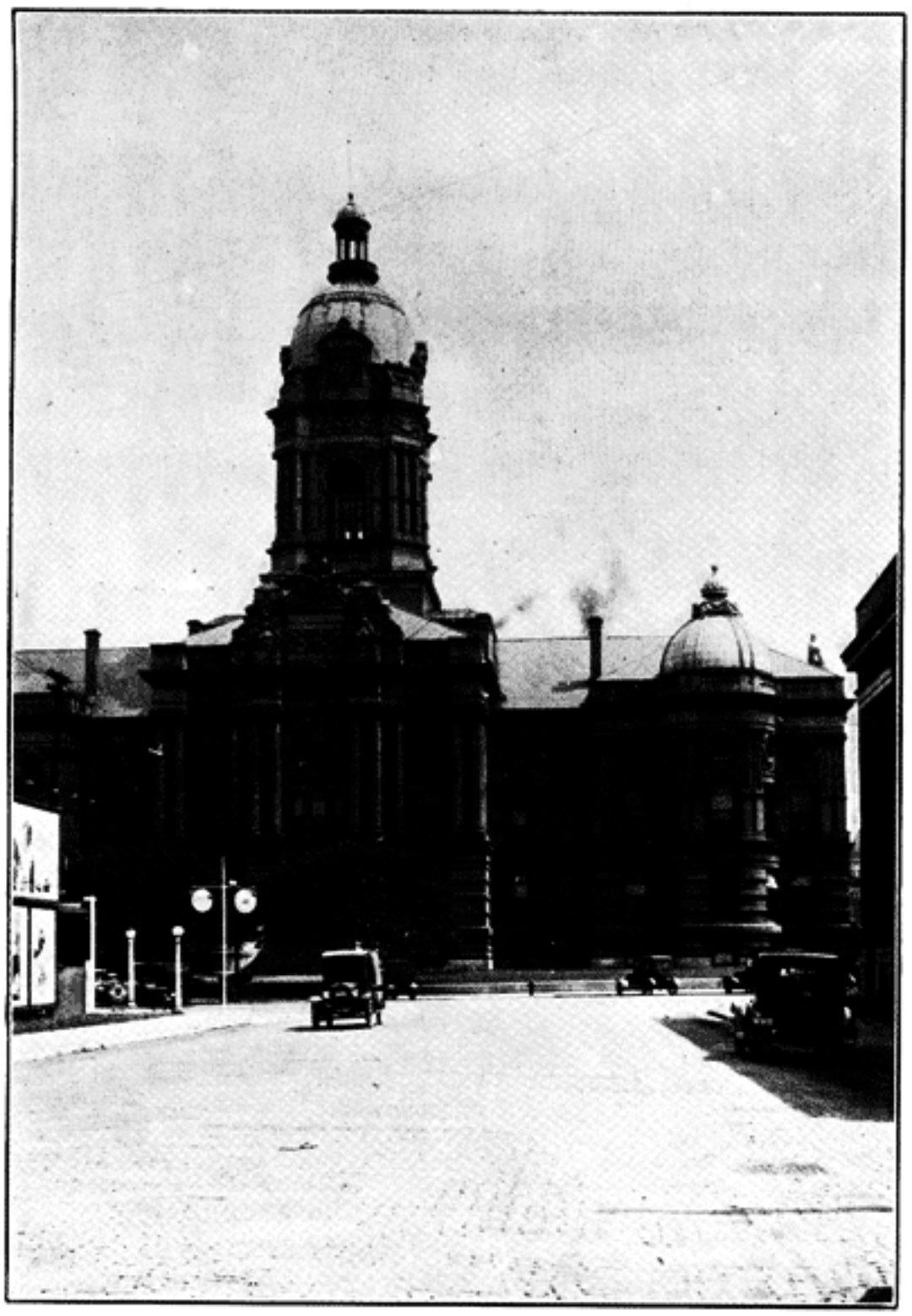


A fine public building like the Coliseum deserves more space around it, with ample lawns and appropriate plantings of trees and shrubs to set it off


A SUGGESTED TREATMENT OF
SUNSET PARK & PROPOSED
CIVIC CENTER
EVANSVILLE INDIANA
CITY PLAN COMMISSION
HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW
CITY PLAN ENGINEER
SAINT LOUIS MISSOURI
CIVIC CENTER
RECREATION FIELD
O H I O

CIVIC CENTER

The public buildings of the city are at present badly scattered. Most progressive cities have either commenced carrying out a civic center plan or are now working on such a plan. Efficiency in the conduct of public business requires that a city have its public buildings grouped together so far as possible, and herein lies one of the chief opportunities of a city to raise its appearance above the common-place. Evansville has a good many city planning needs today more important than a civic center. However, a tentative plan for a wholly new civic center is offered here merely to stimulate discussion. Some day a central library building appropriate to the size and civic ideals of Evansville will probably be built. A new city hall will be required. Some of the other public buildings now in use will become inadequate. Before it is too late, a scheme for grouping these buildings should be formulated. Why not put them on the river? The question merits consideration.



The Court house is a fine old building, injured by inadequate setting. It is almost impossible to find a place from which to see the whole building at once.

STORES

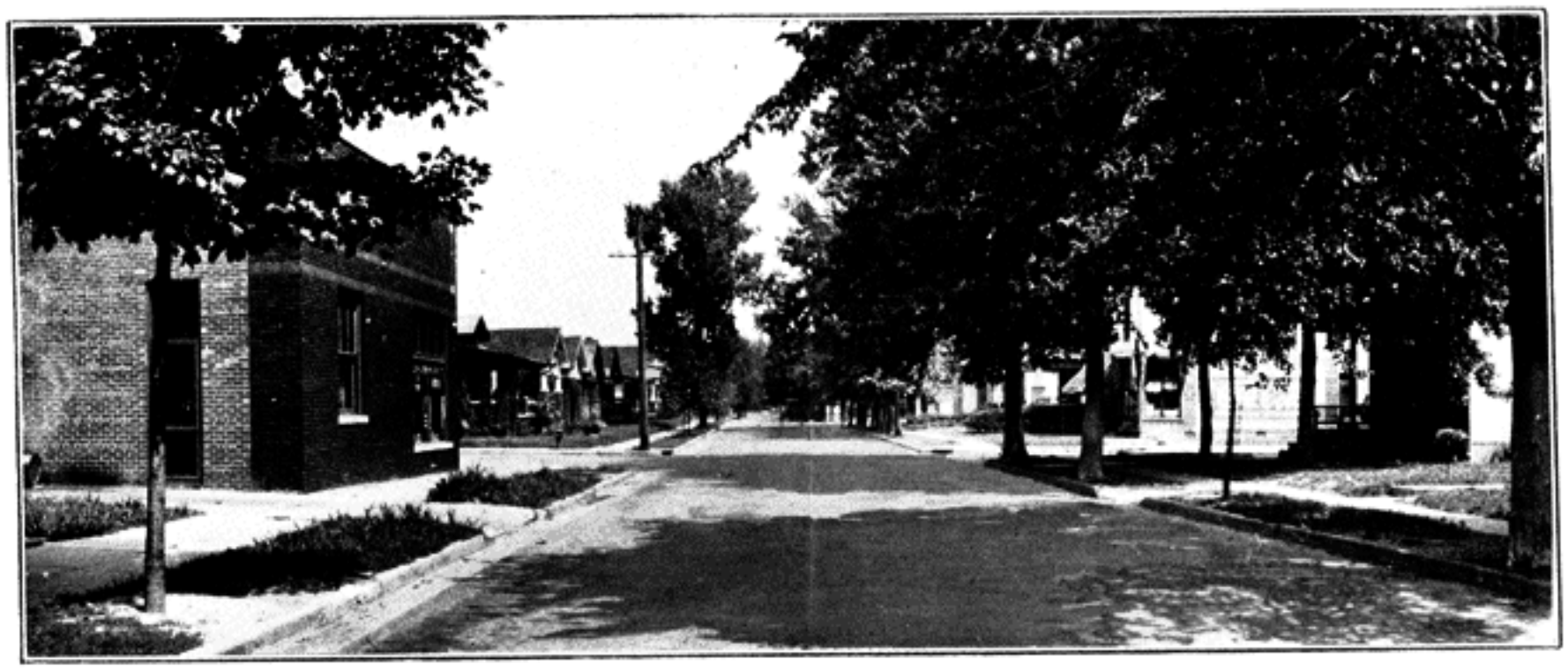
As stores, factories, and homes comprise the vast majority of buildings in the city, their effect on the appearance of the city is, of course, correspondingly great. The scattering of stores promiscuously throughout residence districts has done considerable damage to the city's appearance. The nearly universal custom of building stores out to the street line has hurt the appearance of a good many residence streets and at the same time has injured adjoining lots by making them less desirable for living purposes and reducing their salable value. The Zone Ordinance is now remedying this condition, and tending to prevent residence districts from becoming blighted. Wherever a commercial district under the Zone Plan is to occupy only a part of the frontage in any block, as in many of the neighborhood store centers serving the residence districts, the building line that is fixed for the houses in that block is fixed also as the building line for the stores.

The tendency under the Zone Plan is for stores supplying neighborhood needs to become grouped at certain accessible corners. There is developing in cities a greater interest in these local centers. Their architecture is being studied and many real estate promoters are building structures of uniform type at such points. When thus constructed they have architectural merit and become a credit to the neighborhood which they serve. Certainly the corner store need not be the ugly object that it commonly is.

There has been some improvement in the architectural treatment of downtown store fronts of late. Much more attention should be given to the possibilities of attractive store architecture than has been given in the past, and especially to the preventing of freakish changes in style all along the street. This is a matter which vitally affects the city's appearance and the impression carried away by the stranger. It is also a matter over which the public has no control. Co-operation of individuals and a reliance on the advice of architects will bring improvement.

FACTORIES

The modern idea as to the exterior appearance of factory buildings is to put a little thought and care on this matter at the same time that the inside of the buildings is being carefully planned. Factory managers are getting away from the idea that their works must be ugly and repulsive structures. There is certainly a definite place for attractiveness in this field. There is an advertising value in pleasing industrial structures. Dark, dingy interiors and ugly exteriors are depressing. Well-planned buildings and green outside in the form of grass, vines, shrubbery, and trees do a great deal to stimulate pride among workers. There is an incentive to follow the example and fix up the home grounds. All this helps make the employe a better citizen and inci-



Illustrating the contrast between a store building set back and one built on the street line. Note also the irregular tree planting, the ugly pole and antiquated street light.

Many old unpainted barns and sheds mar the appearance of streets and alleys throughout the city. This one is at the intersection of two streets in a good residential district.

dentally improves the appearance of the city. A few of Evansville's factories already show that more attention is being paid to their outside appearance, for example the following:

Monitor Furniture Co.
Graham Bros. (Truck Co.)
Faultless Caster Co.
Igleheart Bros. (Milling Co.)
Sunbeam Electric Mfg. Co.

RAILROADS

The railroad station has been aptly termed "the gateway to the city." These gateways should be the best possible, not only in conveniences to the public but also in appearance. Evansville compares favorably in this respect with other cities of its size.

Both Evansville stations, however, lack appropriate surroundings. The report of the City Plan Commission on Railroad Transportation recommends a new union station. This scheme if ever carried out should give the city a thoroughly modern and most attractive gateway. If it seems unlikely that a new union station will be built, steps might well be taken now to improve the surroundings of the two present structures. There is little that can be done to the C. & E. I. station except to remove the yard on the east. The L. & N. station, however, could be set off by an open plaza in front. Terre Haute is remembered by many people because of its station plaza. St. Louis is spending several millions creating an open space in front of its Union Station. Evansville could make a considerable showing at low cost by acquiring property across the street from the present L. & N. station.

HOMES

Observations have been made above as to some of the ways in which both private individuals and public authorities have it in their power to contribute appreciably to the attractiveness of the city. Nothing yet has been said about the place of the private home. Probably no single factor is of greater importance in this respect. The great bulk of the city's area is devoted to private dwellings. The individual responsibility of each home owner in producing and maintaining an attractive city is at once apparent.

The mixture of architectural styles and the haphazard placing of buildings of all sizes along the same street is responsible for the disturbing effect found on some streets of Evansville. This is a matter that is subject to no control other than public taste. Where each individual develops his own property, he naturally does that which appeals to him. Through education a gradual improvement of public taste should certainly be sought.

The Zone Ordinance is of some help in preventing serious jumbling of building types. Under its provisions certain districts are being developed only with one-family and two-family houses; no apartments, boarding houses, and so on are permitted. Furthermore, only buildings of two stories or less in height are permitted in such districts. Similarly in the apartment house districts, buildings of only three stories or less in height are allowed. Building lines, too, or front yard lines, are being enforced in all residence zones, thereby assuring observance of the desire of the majority of home-owners, who prefer to have attractive front yards. These provisions are all based on protection of health and property values but their effect in improving the city's appearance is evident.

BARNS AND GARAGES

Unpainted frame barns and sheds built out to the street line at the rear of corner lots are the cause of much unsightliness in Evansville. Gradually these are being replaced by modern garages, but even these are often built right on the street line. In some such corner lot cases, however, the owner has realized what a mistake that is and has set his garage in the corner of the lot farthest from the street, and then kept an attractive lawn at the rear and at the side of his house as well as at the front.

HOME GROUNDS

It is the belief of the City Plan Commission that the majority of home owners in Evansville take pride enough in the appearance of their homes to wish to do all they can to make them attractive. Individual homes scattered here and there about the city show by the attention their owners have given to lawns, shrubbery, trees, vines, and flowers that they appreciate the difference between a house and a real home. A good lawn and a bit of planting are generally sufficient to make this distinction in outward appearance. In an endeavor to encourage the making and keeping of good lawns, the City Plan Commission and Park Board have published a leaflet on this subject which is available to all who call for it. The city, furthermore, is continuing its study of the local lawn problem in order to be of as much help as possible in improving Evansville lawns.

Garages should be back from the street line as far as possible for the sake of street appearance. Compare the two examples.

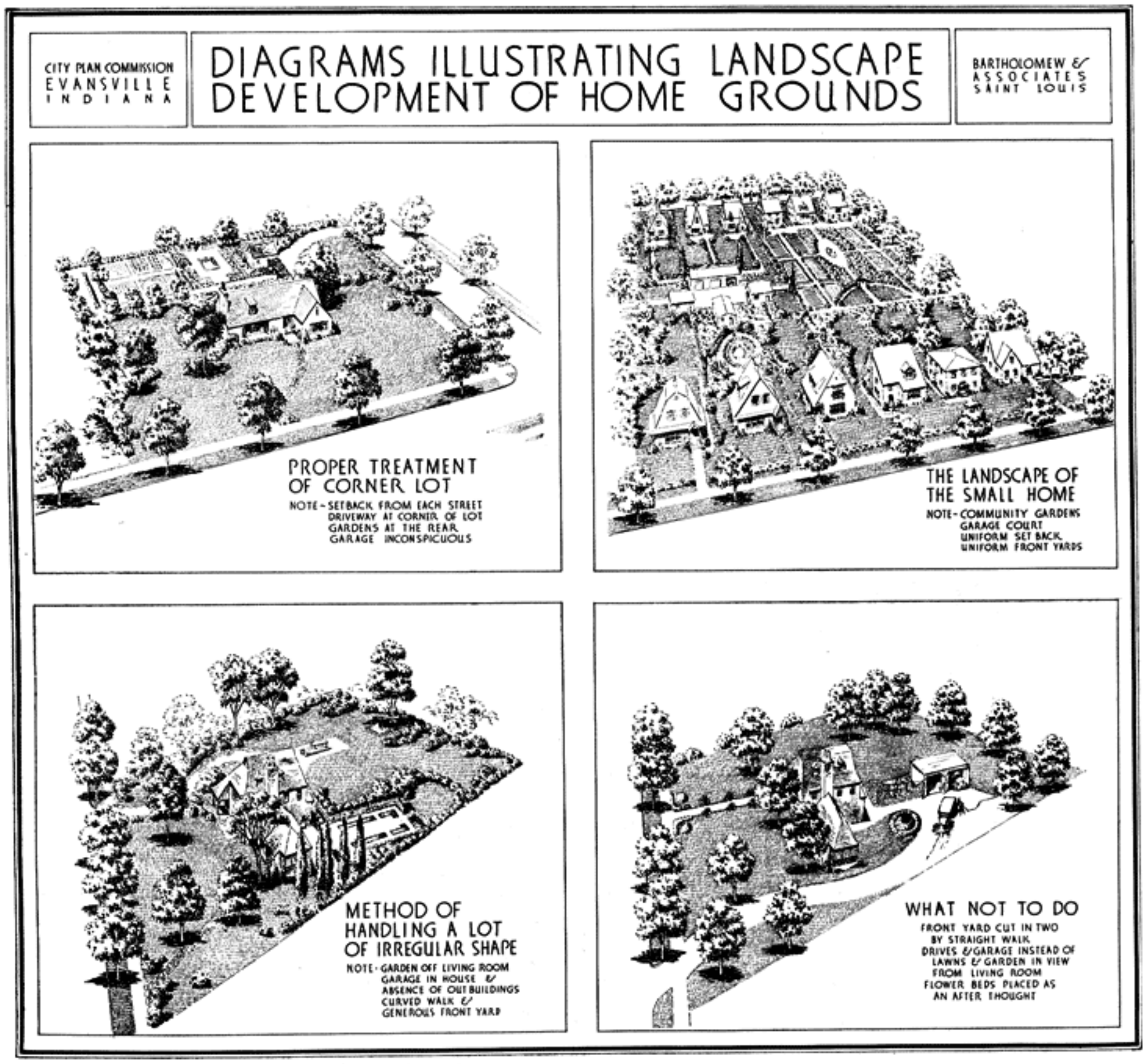

CITY PLAN COMMISSION
EVANSVILLE
INDIANA
DIAGRAMS ILLUSTRATING LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT OF HOME GROUNDS
BARTHOLOMEW & ASSOCIATES
SAINT LOUIS
PROPER TREATMENT OF CORNER LOT
NOTE - SETBACK FROM EACH STREET
DRIVEWAY AT CORNER OF LOT
GARDENS AT THE REAR
GARAGE INCONSPICUOUS
THE LANDSCAPE OF THE SMALL HOME
NOTE - COMMUNITY GARDENS
GARAGE COURT
UNIFORM SET BACK
UNIFORM FRONT YARDS
METHOD OF HANDLING A LOT OF IRREGULAR SHAPE
NOTE - GARDEN OFF LIVING ROOM
GARAGE IN HOUSE &
ABSENCE OF OUT BUILDINGS
CURVED WALK &
GENEROUS FRONT YARD
WHAT NOT TO DO
FRONT YARD CUT IN TWO
BY STRAIGHT WALK
DRIVES & GARAGE INSTEAD OF
LAWNS & GARDEN IN VIEW
FROM LIVING ROOM
FLOWER BEDS PLACED AS
AN AFTER THOUGHT

PLATE 4

PLANTING

In addition to producing a smooth, weedless lawn the average home owner wishes to dress up his house and yard a little with shrubs, flowers, vines and trees. If all the homes in Evansville that are bare of planting were to have a bit of attention along this line, the city would assume a vastly improved appearance. Almost any kind of planting is better than none at all, but, of course, there are good ways and poor ways of arranging plant materials to obtain an interesting effect.

This is far too big a subject to attempt to discuss in any detail in a report like this. An abundance of information is available elsewhere for those who seek it. It may be helpful, however, to list here briefly a few of the fundamental points whose observance is essential to successful planting of the home grounds:

1—Keep shrubs along border of yard and against foundation of house.

2—Avoid use of round flower beds in lawns, hot water tank flower boxes, rubber tire effects and other freakish displays.

3—Make sure that plants placed in the shade are the right sort to grow there. Some plants thrive in the shade, others dwindle and die.

4—Hedges are meant to serve as walls or fences. A hedge-like row of shrubs of the same kind and the same height planted around a front porch or along a house wall produces monotony.

5—In planting against a porch or against the house itself, let certain portions of the foundation remain open to view practically to the ground. Vary the heights of shrubs, placing more shrubs and taller growing ones at the corners, and leading away with lower growing ones

6—Some shrubs and trees make good "specimens;" that is, they have interesting forms and can be used to advantage singly to produce special effects. Most narrow-leaved evergreens belong to this class. Never spot up a lawn with such plants, however, and never plant a row of them around a house. Use them sparingly, and rely on mass planting of shrubs in most places.

7—Every lot should have one or two shade trees. If there is a street tree close to the lot and the lot is small it may not be best to provide another tree at the front of the house. When possible arrange for the trees to enframe the house when seen from the street. It will improve the effect.

8—Find a sunny place along the walk or foundation for the flower bed. A lawn looks best when left open for as broad a space as possible. Flowers look well backed up by the green of shrubbery.

9—One or two vines should climb the porch or the side of the house. It is unnecessary to plant many vines.

10—It will pay to plan the planting layout for the lot on paper or have it done for you before doing the actual planting. Relatively few plants are needed to improve a small lot 100 per cent. in appearance, and a plan will make it possible to arrange these to the best effect.

Shade trees and generous lawns add much to these homes.
Trees and lawns are needed for every home, large or small.
Note the contrast in the two streets.

CONCLUSION

It is quite clear from the preceding discussion that improving the city's appearance is a matter of collective responsibility. City and county officials can do some things. In the main they can go no farther, however, than the people wish them to go. By supporting measures and methods for making a more efficient city as well as for increasing the city's attractiveness, and also by direct assistance as individuals in improving the appearance of the particular property which they happen to own, the people of Evansville can gradually make their streets, parks, buildings and grounds so attractive that their city will be second to none in appearance.

KELLER-CRESCENT CO., EVANSVILLE, IND.