

Zoning Scored as Liberal Hoax

Zoning is considered to be one of the great Liberal hoaxes of our generation by Bernard Siegan in a book titled "Land Use Without Zoning" (Heath & Co., Washington, D.C., \$10).

The author is a Chicago lawyer whose apparent annoyance with the inability of planners to achieve their beautiful dreams led him to a study of their habits and failures.

In a highly technical treatise, Mr. Siegan has analyzed two Texas cities: Houston, which has no zoning laws, and Dallas, which tries to plan its center city and suburbs through application of zoning regulations.

Houston and its suburbs, unfettered by zoning and the continuing altercations over "variances" are little different in appearance and convenience from those of Dallas and its environs. But there is a striking dissimilarity: rents are lower in Houston.

In Houston, the business district and the residential areas have developed as a consequence of market behavior and owe no debt to planners, zoning boards or courts. Although it is an industrial city, plants and offices are clustered along the major arteries, roads, rails and ship facilities. Residential areas are as neat and as comfortable as anywhere else.

Yet, Houston provides greater variety for fewer dollars than does Dallas without undercutting the value of its home sites. It would seem that without land use restrictions, the former city has had greater development without the costs involved in seeking political relief in order to achieve that development.

As in so much bureaucracy, the only ones to benefit from the operation are the bureaucrats themselves. The planners and the zoning officials plus whatever politicians can get into the act may make a good thing out of the program. But for the businessmen and the workers, the homeowners and the housewives there is only the added expense occasioned by the bureaucracy needed to make and administer the plans, the court actions that inevitably follow, and the impediments to production that must result.

Conference on the Property Tax

The problems and debates arising out of Ontario's new assessment program form an ideal backdrop for the School's conference this summer in Toronto — July 4th to 7th.

The Conference is action oriented, according to host Mal McCarthy, president of the School of Economic Science in Ontario. In addition to seminars and meetings with local tax and administrative officials, there will be the participation of several well-known economists and authorities on site value taxation.

You can still get a brochure and reservation blank by writing to School of Economic Science, 2304 Islington Avenue, Rexdale, Ontario.

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