

THE OUTWARD MOVE IN HOUSING—The ever-expanding area of Metropolitan Washington shows its most dramatic growth in new homes. Here a community of houses is going up in formation style at Springfield, Va., near the Shirley Highway.—Star Staff Photo by Paul Schmick.

THE METROPOLITAN VIEWPOINT

Home-Building Trend Tells Suburbia Story

By JOHN V. HORNER

The trend in home building dramatizes what is happening to the National Capital.

For every dwelling built last year within the city limits of Washington, 24 1/2 others were built in the suburbs just outside.

These are the exact figures for new single-family units in 1954: 724 in town, 17,034 in nearby Virginia and Maryland.

During the last three calendar years, the neighboring cities and counties gained 40,489 detached homes while the District was adding just 2,822. Thus the suburban construction accounted for 93.5 per cent in the area's total.

These statistics help explain why—for the first time in history—a majority of the 1.8 million metropolitan residents now live outside the city.

Four Factors Cited

The outlying development is due to four principal factors: an increase in the birth rate, the outward movement of urban families, greater land availability and the attraction of new residents from distant places.

Despite the spectacular suburban growth, the Washington population also continues to rise. This is due primarily to two factors: the higher birth rate and in-migration of Negroes.

Fifteen years ago, only 28.5 per cent of the District population was non-white. By 1950, however, the figure had risen to 35.4. The experts now estimate the city's non-white percentage will jump to 47.1 by 1960.

The suburbs offer a striking contrast.

Non-whites represented 13.8 per cent of their total 1940 population. In 1950 the figure was only 8.7 per cent. It is expected to drop to 7.7 per cent in 1960.

Besides shooting into the lead numerically, the suburbs have acquired a population younger than the District's. Here are the latest official percentages for four different age brackets:

District	Outside
65 years up	7.0
45-64 years	21.6
20-44 years	45.7
Under 20 years	25.7
Total	100.0

Authorities estimate that, within five more years, a whopping 47.7 per cent of all the suburban population will be younger than 20. This will compare with 29.1 per cent for the same age bracket in the District.

All these changes—in population, housing, racial distribution and age groupings—affect the community profoundly. But the sociological, economic and political impact cannot yet be measured.

As has been noted, people move into and out of the city for numerous reasons, some affirmative and some negative. Either they aspire to better themselves or they seek respite from objectionable conditions.

In the new surroundings, unfortunately, the grass is not always so green as it first appeared. Moving families don't necessarily find what they expected.

But one thing everybody has discovered: A lot of other people had precisely the same idea, and about the same time.

Consequently, mass movements and rapid expansion have created for suburbia some of the very conditions which were to have been left behind. The young communities also face some new and unanticipated problems.

Needed Water, Schools

When hundreds of thousands of residents flocked into the nearby area after World War II, they needed water supply, sewer systems, sidewalks and streets. For their children they demanded more and more classrooms, more teachers, more playgrounds.

Their automobiles choked every existing highway. They tied traffic in ever-tightening

knots. The people complained about public transportation. They howled about do-nothing office holders.

Some of the older, established residents howled back. As natives, they were satisfied with what they had had. They did not welcome the swarm of low-taxpayers invaders.

Local governments were unprepared to cope with the monstrous demands for service. Even those most willing to act in an emergency could not put up new schoolhouses overnight, or plan and finance multi-million dollar road programs in a week.

Friction Was Inevitable

Friction between old-timers and newcomers was inevitable. A determined and articulate group, the Johnny-come-lately crowd organized and began to exert political pressure. In time they achieved some of their goals.

In the process, the cost of government rocketed.

Fairfax County got by in 1940 with a budget of \$1.3 million. Its budget now is \$13.8 million. In the same 15 years, Arlington and Montgomery increased their budgets from \$3 million to \$23 million and \$26 million, respectively.

The people soon learned they had to foot the bill. They absorbed successive tax raises and upward valuation of property to boot. In Prince Georges, for example, the basic rate has risen in 10 years from \$1.82 to \$2.35 per \$100 valuation.

The situation is similar in the other jurisdictions, Falls Church and Alexandria.

City Has Its Troubles

The District has been having troubles, too. The city budget was \$70 million in 1945 and is \$175 million now. Still the Commissioners cannot meet all the demands for service. Among the problems is one caused by the population shift: The average income level is declining at the same time, more money must be spent in public assistance and for other activities.

Though the Federal Government makes Metropolitan Washington click, it also imposes financial hardships. In the District alone, its extensive installations occupy 12,703 of the 44,000 acres of land here. It is tax free. If this and federally held property nearby were in private hands, the various local and State governments would collect millions of dollars annually in sorely needed revenue.

Need For Grants

This is why Congress is asked to make grants in lieu of taxes to the Metropolitan cities and counties.

Those are financial problems. Every community has them, along with other problems peculiarly local.

But all communities of Metropolitan Washington also share many common concerns. They are confronted with interlocking

questions about roads, traffic, parking and transportation. They must solve still more questions about schools, zoning and park reservations. They must face integration.

Tendency to Pessimism

Insofar as the District's future is concerned, there is a tendency in some quarters toward pessimism. The fear is expressed that heavy concentration of people in the surrounding residential areas will lead to downtown stagnation. The reasoning is based on the fact that many suburban housewives find it more convenient to shop in the new developments than to battle city traffic congestion and parking.

Not everyone, however, is pessimistic. A substantial element of businessmen and civic leaders are confident the local problem can be licked.

One person who speaks with considerable authority because of his experience as the former Engineer Commissioner here is Maj. Gen. Louis W. Prentiss.

Reasons for Moving

"I have the personal thought," he said, "that people are moving out primarily in order to get away from something rather than to get something."

"Often, what they find is conditions that are no better. They will only go so far away. They have to consider the time and transportation to get from home to their jobs and back again."

"When they get there, they ask themselves, what do they have?"

Gen. Prentiss, now commanding officer at Fort Belvoir, believes the time is approaching when redevelopment of many old sections of the District will be economically feasible for investors. Then, he says, people will begin leap-frogging back into the city to enjoy the convenience of proximity to their work.

The metropolitan transition constitutes the new civic challenge. It is going to require citizens in all the communities to think tall.

This is the last in a series of articles on problems created by the tremendous growth of the Washington Metropolitan area.

Liege Soil Accepted At Virginia Memorial

RICHMOND, Va., May 27 (AP)—Soil from the Belgian city of Liege was presented to Virginia as a lasting reminder of human sacrifice in time of war.

Given by Belgian Ambassador Baron Silvercruys yesterday, the soil will be inclosed in the wall of the State's World War II Memorial, along with a medal and a bit of wood taken from the post where 126 Belgians were executed for their refusal to surrender to the Germans. Gov. Stanley accepted the gift.

Veterinary Tests Set

RICHMOND, May 27 (AP)—The president of the State Board of Veterinary Examiners, Dr. Taylor P. Rowe, announced today his organization will conduct tests for applicants here June 30 and July 1.

Flat 10-Cent Fire Tax Sought in Montgomery

By CHARLES L. HOFFMAN

Montgomery County Councilman Wilbur N. Baughman last night warned that next year he would press for a flat 10-cent tax rate on a county-wide basis for fire protection.

His statement was made as the council gave the new Laytonsville fire tax area more territory presently belonging to the Sandy Spring Fire Department.

Mr. Baughman added that under his proposal all volunteer fire departments "would have a budget and come before the county council with it just like every other department."

"We'll be more ready for it next year," Mr. Baughman said. He added he had been surprised at the number of fire companies that have expressed support of the plan. The Silver Spring company "will go along with it," he said.

The volunteer fire companies now maintain their own budgets, usually handled by a local fire board. Some companies levy taxes on their residents while others are supported entirely by voluntary contributions.

In the past fire companies have bitterly fought attempts to bring them under control of the council.

4 Other Bills Pass

The council last night also passed four other bills.

One would give the council authority to adopt a leash and muzzle law for dogs and cats and require residents to keep dogs off school grounds.

Another abolishes the necessity of the council passing bond authorization legislation annually. The third would cancel out authorities granted in past years. Another would change the chief of police title to superintendent of police.

The council last night also heard the County Personnel Board and the Police Association go separate ways on a bill to revise the police retirement system.

Sergt. Robert Dutrow said the police association would go along with the proposed increase from 2.5 per cent to 5 per cent of police contributions. He said the association opposed a move to establish a minimum retirement age of 55.

Sergt. Dutrow supported proposed amendments being submitted by Councilman Robert T. Snure that would increase widows' benefits from \$80 to \$125 and benefits for children of deceased officers from \$20 to \$25 monthly.

Mrs. Dinwoodey Testifies

Mrs. Edith Dinwoodey, personnel board member, urged the council to act to make the system financially sound. She said present benefits, according to a 1952 survey, would require that the county and the police each put up 16 per cent of the total payroll to make it sound.

Obligations, according to the study, amount to \$3.9 million while present payments into the fund will hit only \$562,000, she said.

A bill to bar county employees and officials from receiving gifts from persons doing business with the county "was not intended to cast any aspersions on any county employ," County Manager M. L. Reese said.

"It is more of a protection than a penalty," Mr. Reese added. He said the bill was rare in that it also provides penalties for persons offering such gifts. The council did not vote on it last night.

The council will meet at 1 p.m. Monday and again Tuesday in Legislative Session.

Light Is Ordered At Arlington Blvd. And Graham Road

The Virginia State Department of Highways soon will install a traffic light at the intersection of Arlington boulevard and Graham road where Fairfax County officials have been seeking a light for two years.

J. P. Mills, Jr., traffic and planning engineer for the highway department, told The Star today that a recent survey of traffic conditions at the intersection shows a traffic light is needed.

A survey by The Star, with the co-operation of Fairfax County police, showed that 20 crashes had occurred at the intersection this year—eight involving personal injuries.

Fairfax County officials also have been seeking a reduction in the 55 mile per hour speed limit along a four-mile stretch of Arlington Boulevard between Gallows road and Seven Corners. The Graham road intersection is one of 23 along that stretch. The State plans a new traffic check to see if a lower speed limit is justified.

Arlington Woman Wins Lions Music Award

ROANOKE, Va., May 27 (AP)—Victor Ludwig of Charlottesville and Josephine Pollard of Arlington won first prizes last night in the Virginia State finals in the James A. Bland music scholarship contest sponsored by the Virginia Lions clubs.

Mr. Ludwig, a flutist, won the white division and Miss Pollard, a vocalist, won the Negro division. The contest was in the Hotel Roanoke here as a feature of the 32d annual State Lions convention.

Both winners received a \$300 scholarship to a "recognized school of music or qualified music teacher" and a trophy and certificate.

New York Model to Reign As June Week Queen

ANNAPOLIS, May 27 (AP)—A 24-year-old New York model and television actress will arrive here tonight to become the queen bee of the Naval Academy's 3,400-man brigade of midshipmen and the June Week festivities ending their scholastic year.

She's Marilyn Mohr, chosen by Midshipman John R. Johnson, captain of the top company among 24 in the brigade.

Midshipman Johnson's 18th company was declared the winner late yesterday of a year-long competition in drills, athletics and other activities and his date for June Week was elevated to a spot of envy among thousands of other sweethearts.

As Color Girl she will be the toast of many social activities winding up with commencement exercises. But her real moment of glory will come next Thursday when she stands on Worden Field with Rear Admiral Walter F. Boone, academy superintendent, to review the last dress parade of the 1955 class and pass the national and brigade colors to her company commander.

They will be transferred to the 18th from the 23rd company, last year's winner, to the cheers of the entire brigade.

Miss Mohr—a trim, 5-foot-7 brunet with brown eyes—will be the 79th in a line of color



MARILYN MOHR
Midshipmen's Color Girl
—AP Wirephoto

girls, who traditionally sport broad-brim picture hats and flouncy spring dresses.

In effect, she will be queen of the entire week which begins with an 11 a.m. dress parade tomorrow and reaches a climax next Friday when 740 newly commissioned officers in the Navy, Air Force and Marines throw their caps to the rafters of Dahlgren Hall.

Woodley Residents To Open New Pool

The Woodley Recreation Association will officially open its new community pool tomorrow at 2 p.m. with a swimming demonstration by award-winning young swimmers from the Washington area.

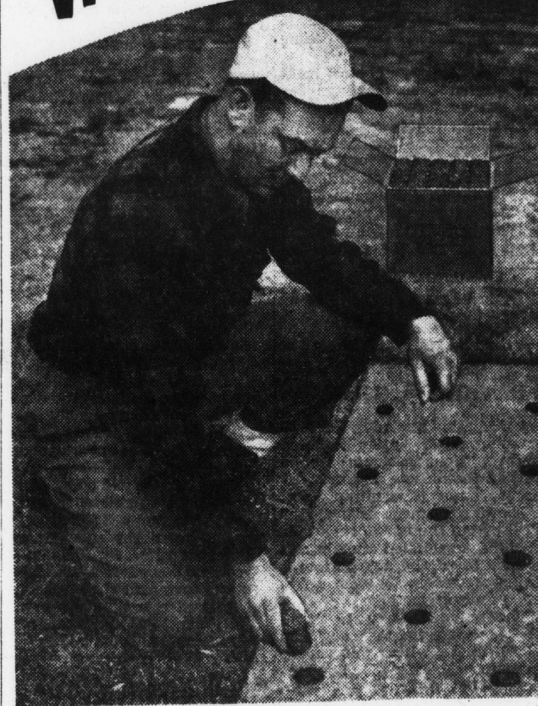
The 80-by-45-foot pool serves 390 shareholders in the Fairfax County communities of South Woodley, North Woodley, Westlawn and Broyhill Park.

Maryland State to Give Two Honorary Degrees

PRINCESS ANNE, Md., May 27 (AP)—Gov. McKeldin will speak at commencement exercises here Tuesday when about 50 seniors receive their diplomas from Maryland State College.

Honorary degrees will be conferred by the Negro college on Edward N. Wilson, registrar at Morgan Teachers College, and Julius A. Thomas, secretary of industrial relations of the Urban League of New York.

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