

TOWN PLANNING

Some personal reminiscences.

On leaving University in April of 1931, unemployment was severe. Like thousands of others, I had no remunerative work, I was broke, financially, and my parents had to look after my keep at home. I was single then.

That summer the Cobourg town council decided to do something for the unemployed. For a number of years, the placement of a sanitary sewer in ~~in~~ the mid-town creek valley had been discussed. Under difficulties, the town ordered the work, under the supervision of the town foreman, J.A. Campbell. A sewer was installed from the harbour to Park Street. In October, I was given about nine days of work on this job, at labour, @ 30 cents per hour. Engineering wise, the sewer was built with a number of faults, due to poor layout, poor planning, poor design, etc. It did give much maintenance trouble for a number of years later.

At that time, a sewage treatment plant was discussed, but not dealt with. The idea was to locate such a plant at the harbourfront. Fortunately it never materialized.

When I came off that sewer job, I decided to use my time in pursuit of town planning studies in a private way, studying at home. With the little bit of money I had, I purchased a text book on the subject. From it and other library readings, I gained a bit of an idea of what town planning was all about. I followed this idea up by going into the Registry Office and with the permission of the Registrar, Captain Hugh McCullough, I copied out all the old Cobourg sub-division plans I could find in the old copy books. I also copied the composite Caddy Plan of the town onto linen in ink. This plan detailed all the town lots. The Registry Office copy became dilapidated and later disappeared, probably worn out through use. To-day, the linnen copy I made is on deposit in the Archives of Ontario., the only record that I know of to-day.

In my studies, I advanced ideas of what I thought Cobourg needed. This was done privately, and from time to time as the opportunity presented itself. There was sort of an evolution going on in my plans. By January 1933, I had drafted an overall trunk sewer system for the town area. This plan was basic to the other plans in respect for gravity flow of sewers. My plan included a sewage treatment plant in the Factory Creek basin, rather than the harbour area. In 1938, I wrote several articles for the Cobourg papers on the subject of town planning as applied to the Town.

In 1942-43, while working in Toronto on war work, I took advantage of a study course (evenings) at the University of Toronto. After this course of study, I made a final overall plan for the future development of Cobourg. I tried to interest some then local politicians in my scheme, but without success. However my study course did help me later when I became involved in municipal council work.

Percy L. Climo

*Climo, Sept 6/89*