

Conclusion - This review of methods for determining the value of trees along highways, and suggested "S" values for shade trees of the cool humid region are presented for introductory purposes. The Committee on Roadside Development will welcome any suggestions or constructive criticisms for consideration at its next annual meeting. Specific examples of the use of tree evaluation methods are invited by the Committee.

#### References:

Proceedings of the Twentieth Annual Meeting - New Jersey Federation of Shade Tree Commissions, December 5, 1945.

"Real Estate Appraising" - James D. Henderson - Bankers and Tradesman's Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

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### HIGHWAY ZONING IN VIRGINIA

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The exorbitant cost involved in moving buildings and other structures for modern highway reconstruction has been of great concern to the State Highway Commission of Virginia. The General Assembly in 1944 instructed the Highway Commission to prepare a "Twenty Year Plan" for the development of the Virginia Primary Highway System. An intensive survey and study of the needs for this modernization indicated an estimated cost of nearly five hundred million dollars. The plans for this modernization provide for four classes of roads. Class I and Class II are interstate and intercity; Class I being a four lane divided highway, requiring a 160 ft. right of way - Class II, two lane, requiring 110 ft. right of way - Class III involves heavy travelled local roads requiring an 80 ft. right of way, while Class IV is a lightly travelled road with a 50 ft. right of way. When it is considered that before the adoption of this plan, normal rights of way in Virginia for the Class I and II roads were from 60 to 80 ft. in width and other roads from 30 to 60 ft., many built a decade or more ago, and all have, naturally, become built up with a ribbon development of houses, stores, garages, filling stations, and other structures. With no established setback lines, most of these buildings have been built close to the edge of the present right of way and will be within the future right of way line. While provision has been made in the estimated cost of the modernization program for the moving of existing buildings, it is impossible to forecast the cost of handling future encroachments in this area.

Surveys of Encroachment of Structures on Right-of-Way - A careful study of 178 miles of reconstruction projects, built during the past seven years, in different sections of the State and under varying conditions portrayed an overall cost of \$528,666 for the moving, purchasing, or rebuilding of structures. This is an average of \$2,970 per mile. Another rough survey was made within an area of ten miles of one of the leading cities, based on existing conditions and potential developments during the next decade, indicated that it would cost the State at

least one-half million dollars to handle the moving of structures within that area for the reconstruction program on the main highways not including the cost of the land to be taken. During a twenty-year period, it has been estimated that normal growth of urban and rural areas in Virginia will involve an overall cost of over twenty-six million dollars for the moving of buildings and other structures that will be built from now on, not including existing buildings, before the twenty-year modernization plan can be completed. It is evident that some measures should be taken to relieve the Commonwealth of this unnecessary expenditure.

Mutual Protection of Private and Public Interests - Not only is the State interested in conserving its funds for the necessary highway construction costs, but it is also looking to the protection of private interests. For example: a person may build a comfortable house in a rural area on a highway, grade the lawn, plant shade and fruit trees and embellish the grounds with shrubbery. Each year the trees and shrubs develop and flourish, then the plans are perfected for reconstructing the highway and the landowner is bought out and ordered to move. The moving of the house is not only an inconvenience to the tenant, but it is not always possible to re-establish the landscape effects immediately, and where fruit trees are involved, these many times become an entire loss to the owner. In another case, a man establishes a rural store and filling station and then is ordered to move. During the moving process, his gas pumps are out of service for a time and customers find another dealer nearby, and the first man has to promote a new trade when his facilities are again made available. He is the loser in many ways.

County Zoning Acts and State Planning Board - In an endeavor to offset this, the State Highway Commission and State Planning Board have appointed a joint committee to make an intensive study of existing zoning legislation and effect procedures with which to put these laws into more complete operation. Zoning is not a new feature in the Old Dominion, for the General Assembly of 1926 passed an act permitting municipalities to undertake zoning. The following year, the county zoning act was passed. Through subsequent legislation, zoning legislation has been fortified and changed until the present county zoning act was passed in 1938. There was also an act establishing a State Planning Board. Among other duties vested in the State Planning Board is one "To advise with the various State departments, bureaus, and institutions with a view to the coordination of all development plans that are related to an orderly and comprehensive development of the State." The actual practice of instituting, planning, and zoning has been left entirely to local authorities, the Board of Supervisors of each of the one hundred counties. The State Planning Board has taken the position that until county authorities initiate planning and a demand for zoning studies, they are not at liberty to promote public interest of any community towards this end. In 1944 the General Assembly passed a Regional Planning Act. In 1946 the Land Subdivision Act was passed, which gives the several counties the authority to pass ordinances regulating subdivisions within the county. In addition, it provides for the joint control by the county and city of any subdivision within a five mile radius of any city having a population of over one hundred thousand, and within a three mile radius of a city of under one hundred thousand, and within a two mile radius of a town. At the present time, 49 counties, 16 cities, 26 towns, and 1 region have planning commissions, but of this number, only 10 counties, 15 cities, and 4 towns have passed zoning ordinances. All of this indicates the

fact that the majority of people, especially in rural areas, are not interested in zoning measures or anything that restricts the use of their lands, and the political heads of these counties are naturally governed by the dictates of their constituents.

Setback Lines for Border Control - However, when millions of dollars are involved in the development and modernization of the highway system and the responsibility for protecting the State's interest falls on the heads of local governments, as it naturally does in the case of unnecessary highway costs involved in moving buildings that could be averted by highway zoning with setback lines for border control, many of these county supervisors are becoming interested in the plea of the State Highway Commission for definite assistance. The joint committee, composed of five engineers from the Highway Department, and four members of the State Planning Board, with one engineer from each of these departments acting as liaison between the committee and the county authorities, is in the process of advising the county officials of the estimated cost under present conditions of developing the road system within their county. In addition thereto, they are showing how much more the roads will cost or the extension of time necessary within which to complete the proposed work, unless some measures are taken to see that all buildings constructed hereafter are placed well back of the ultimate right of way line. They are also being told of the counties that are in the process of establishing planning commissions and passing zoning ordinances primarily and principally for establishing setback lines along the primary highways that will protect theirs as well as the State's interest in this mammoth program.

"DOLLARS AND SENSE" - This committee has prepared a short pamphlet entitled "Dollars and Sense," carrying a letter of endorsement from His Excellency, Governor William M. Tuck, and outlining simple facts relating to highway safety and the rapidly increasing cost of rights of way. They have also prepared a "Suggested Outline For A Highway Zoning Ordinance For Virginia Counties." These stress highway zoning for building setbacks and, at the same time, call attention to the more comprehensive types of zoning. The assistance of the members of the committee is offered to county officials in effecting such an ordinance. Public meetings are being held in various parts of the State in which these circulars are distributed and explanations made regarding the accruing values to the locality and the property owners. Pictorial exhibits are being shown at these meetings which portray some of the work done by the Highway Department in the moving of buildings for right of way acquisitions. Moving pictures and slides are also being prepared for this educational program. It is very gratifying to note the keen interest being manifested by county officials, civic organizations, garden clubs, as well as individual property owners in this overall program for the protection of highway funds in the "Old Dominion," in order that the State Highway Systems may be modernized within the twenty year period in an economical and efficient manner.