

## GENERAL DISCUSSION: PART 1

N. M. Wells, Moderator  
Director, Landscape Bureau  
New York State Department of Public Works

This discussion followed the reading of two papers by H. H. Iurka and O. A. Deakin.

WOLF: What do you have against enclosing trees in wells?

IURKA: Aeration and drainage are difficult to provide or correct. Trees die from suffocation, starvation, or neglect. Removal of the dead trees and the wells is sometimes costly.

WALKER: Is the maintenance engineer called in during design stages to consult on critical areas or problems?

IURKA: Yes, he is always called in for consultation.

BRANT: What was the character of the adjacent land along some of the roadsides that have narrow or wide medians?

IURKA: The nature of the land varied. Land values do control width of right-of-way and median, unfortunately. In reality, the additional cost of land for wider medians is a small percentage of the total cost of a highway.

WELLS: In New York, Robert Moses has been highly instrumental in having play areas or small areas of natural character added to the highway right-of-way.

LOUTZENHEISER: In considering ease of mowing wide slide slopes, where do you draw the line on how wide slopes for mowing should be?

DEAKIN: On rural highways in New Jersey, we try to have a 75-ft width for slopes, usually on a 4:1 ratio for the use of mechanical equipment. Wider slopes and medians in rural areas are possible because of lower land values and lower construction costs.

IURKA: Slopes steeper than 3:1 require planting in New York City areas. The use of walls helps keep slope ratios small and reduces width of right-of-way.

HOTTENSTEIN: On the Ohio Turnpike's medial area, we try to achieve safety. There is a 40-ft width of grass, plus 16 ft of shoulders. Occasionally, vehicles out of control cross into the opposite roadway despite the wide median and a drainage depression. We believe that a maximum benefit has been achieved by these widths because the damage to vehicles and other property has been low.

ASTRUP: In constructing wide medians, much acreage is taken from tax rolls. What is the public attitude in this respect?

DEAKIN: Land taken in rural areas is low in value, there is very little loss to tax rolls. Safety benefits more than compensate for this loss.

IURKA: By way of information, the State of New York collects about \$450 in taxes for each new house. Each family averages two children, which cost the state \$600 each to educate.

This discussion followed the reading of a paper by W. W. Steiner.

BRANT: Is the rose shown in your illustration Rosa wichuriana?

STEINER: Yes, it is. This plant is hardy in New York. It does not grow more than 18 in. high. To be certain of a pure stand of this rose, we need to be assured of the seed source.

WOLF: Is it necessary to provide nourishment with Bemis Bag when it is used to hold down a straw mulch? I understand that the bag is made of paper.

STEINER: Just straw mulch is used with the bag. This holds back erosion by slowing down runoff. There are times when jute bag may be used instead of the paper bag and straw. The jute eliminates the need for straw. It retards erosion and holds down weed growth. It helps to keep seed and soil in place, and retains moisture in the soil.

SLACK: What are the costs per square yard, in place, of Bemis Bag and jute?

STEINER: Bemis Bag costs about 4 cents per square yard to purchase. With this you still need straw. Jute mat, at present, costs about 18 cents per square yard to purchase. We may produce a more open weave that may cost about 13 cents per yard.

SLACK: On how steep a slope has this material been used?

STEINER: We have used Bemis Bag and jute on ditch bottoms having a slope of 15 percent.

DEAKIN: We are using some jute material on sections of the Interstate in New Jersey, and have observed the 15 percent slope section mentioned by Steiner.

STEINER: The jute must cover all of the ditch bottom to be effective, otherwise erosion will develop along the sides.

WALKER: Was an analysis made of the soil on the bank where crown vetch was used?

STEINER: Yes, an analysis was made. We were surprised to learn that the soil was so acid.

ASTRUP: Have you ever used burlap in place of jute?

STEINER: Yes, but we have found that jute is better.

SIMONSON: What fertilization was given where beach grass was used on sand dunes?

STEINER: We used 800 lb of 10-10-10 per acre, on split applications. We have tried some stands of beach grass without fertilization, with poor results.