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BEFORE MAILING
BY M.E.M.

16th September, 1911.

Mr. George W. Marston, Chairman,
Building and Grounds Committee, San Diego, Cal.

My dear Mr. Marston:

Knowing your deep interest in the proper development of Balboa Park, I venture to make a suggestion with reference to the location of the buildings for the Exposition.

This is based upon the assumption that the Exposition people and the Park Commission have irrevocably decided not to have the Exposition where I planned it: or in other words at the so-called southern site.

For personal and professional reasons I particularly request that you do not in any way let it become known that I have had to do with the suggestion.

My suggestion is that the two permanent buildings, namely, the Art Building and the California State Building, be placed a short distance north of Date St.,

the former centering on 9th Street and the latter centering on 7th Street if practicable, a drive to lead on an easy curve swinging to the right from the present Date Street entrance drive to the spur where there is now a little children's gymnastic apparatus. From this spur to the spur immediately north of Spanish Canyon I suggest a bridge substantially as shown on my recent plans and presumably at El. 175. The drive could then rise from the bridge with a grade of 5 or 6 per cent round the southeast side of the spur, reaching the level of the Mesa by crossing a little branch ravine of another branch ravine which descends into the Spanish Canyon. The main group of temporary buildings to be then distributed on the spur and on Mesa Viscaino, keeping most of the necessarily permanent improvements of the ground in connection with plazas, buildings, etc. entirely south of the line of Laurel Street.

This scheme would have very great advantages over Mr. Allen's scheme as regards the best development of the park; after the temporary buildings, etc. have been removed. The two permanent buildings would be in a thoroughly convenient and respectable location and they would be where they would interfere far less with the landscape of the interior, open portions of the park than as proposed on Mr. Goodhue's plan for the central site.

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The permanent buildings will be conveniently accessible at night and will be more useful and more resorted to, I think, than at the central site even if (what I hope will never be the case) the land boomers succeed in forcing a street railway across the park to make the central site accessible.

The bridge as I suggest it would be far more useful and convenient both for people passing through the park as a short-cut and for those using the bridge as part of a ^{circuit} pleasure drive through the park, than the bridge located on the line of Maple Street proposed on Mr. Allen's plan. It would also be much lower and smaller and therefore less out of proportion to the landscape of the park; and, moreover, it would cost a great deal less than Mr. Allen's project, being much shorter as well as lower.

The necessary formal plazas, terraces, straight drives and walks, ornamental fountains, statuary and all the other architectural and formal improvements of the ground which Mr. Goodhue will doubtless include in a plan for the site now suggested, if it should be adopted, would be far less intrusive upon the broad open simple landscape of Campo de Serra; or in other words the present golf grounds.

If aviation is to be made a feature of the Exposition, there would be much more open level ground available for it in the northern portion of the present golf grounds in this scheme than if the Exposition is placed with its axis on the line of Maple Street as proposed in Mr. Goodhue's plan for the central site.

If the land boomers carry through the idea of an electric railway across the park, to be used in connection with the Exposition and to remain as a permanent short-cut route between the University district and the business center of the City, it would be possible to combine it with this Mesa Viscaino site for the temporary buildings of the Exposition by carrying it across the suggested bridge. My idea would be to have the electric railway pass under the Date Street entrance drive north of the California Building if the expense can be afforded and to have it fenced off from the Exposition grounds. It could then cross the bridge underneath the driveway, making the bridge a double decker. From the northeast end of the bridge it could be carried below, that is southeast of the 5-percent drive above referred to, still fenced off from the Exposition until it reaches the Mesa level, where there could be a permanent railway shelter. It could then continue in a northeasterly direction to the west edge of Serra Canyon and thence northward along the edge of the Canyon, but 25 or 30 feet below the

Mesa, crossing the proposed circuit drive and canyon southeast of the Country Club by a bridge. From the point where it reaches the Mesa level to the edge of Serra Canyon it could be fenced off from the Exposition and access to the spurs southeast of it from the main Exposition group could be by subways under it, utilizing perhaps some of the little branch canyons.

An alternative scheme for the electric railway route might possibly be to run it northerly from the northeast end of Cabrillo bridge until it reaches the Mesa level or nearly so and then to extend northerly across the upper parts of the little canyons east of Cabrillo Canyon, then northeasterly to the park Boulevard north of the park.

I have given no study to these suggestions on the topographical map and merely throw them out as suggestions to you to talk over with whoever is the designer who will be employed to take our place.

I know that Mr. Goodhue, for artistic reasons, will be very strongly opposed to having the permanent buildings near Date Street and the group of temporary buildings separated from them (on Mesa Viscaino.) Of course he wants to gain the great advantage in effectiveness of grouping the permanent buildings with the temporary build-

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ings, but I do not think this artistic gain would in the least justify the consequent ruination of the simple broad open portion of the park. Still, if the Mesa Vixcaino site should be adopted it would certainly be much less injurious to the best landscape development of the park to have the permanent buildings at the southwest end of the group of temporary buildings and on the spur northwest of Spanish Canyon than to have them on Campo de Serra and on the center line of Maple Street extended.

I know that Col. Collier will object to locating the Agricultural College at Date and Seventh Streets because he wants to have the City give to the College some 40 or 50 acres of good level land in the center of the park for experimental fruit farming. I certainly do not believe the people of San Diego ought to thus give away the most available portion of their park for field sports and outdoor recreation and I believe it will be sufficiently satisfactory to the administrators of the Agricultural College to have a fruit farm further from the City even if the College building proper is located at Date and 7th Streets or anywhere else in the park.

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I am particularly anxious that none of these ideas should ever be attributed to me as they would in any case be very injurious to the best development of the park, although I feel sure that some such arrangement could be worked out and that it would be much less injurious to the park than Mr. Goodhue's plan for the central site. I should in fact be greatly obliged to you if you would return this letter to me without even making a copy of it.

Very truly yours,