

The Garden Suburb of Lindenlea, Ottawa A Model Project for the First Federal Housing Policy, 1918–24

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Volume 19, numéro 3, february 1991

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1017590ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/1017590ar>

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Éditeur(s)

Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine

ISSN

0703-0428 (imprimé)

1918-5138 (numérique)

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Citer cet article

Delaney, J. (1991). The Garden Suburb of Lindenlea, Ottawa: A Model Project for the First Federal Housing Policy, 1918–24. *Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine*, 19(3), 151–165. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1017590ar>

Résumé de l'article

La cité jardin de Lindenlea, en banlieue d'Ottawa, a été construite après la Première Guerre mondiale. Conçue par Thomas Adams, elle est l'œuvre de la Commission fédérale de l'habitation, qui y voyait un modèle d'habitat à loyer modique à proposer aux municipalités canadiennes. La conception des logements et le plan d'aménagement, manifestement inspirés de l'idéologie de la réforme urbaine, sont très révélateurs de l'attitude du gouvernement fédéral à l'égard du logement subventionné en cette période où l'État commence à peine à intervenir dans la domaine social. Les idées modernes de rationalisation, d'efficacité et de standardisation, conjuguées aux notions de santé physique, sociale et morale caractéristiques de la fin de l'ère victorienne, ont donné naissance à des logements modernes sur le plan technique mais traditionnels sur le plan idéologique.

The Garden Suburb of Lindenlea, Ottawa:

A Model Project for the First Federal Housing Policy, 1918–24

Jill Delaney

Abstract

The garden suburb of Lindenlea in Ottawa was designed by Thomas Adams and built by the Ottawa Housing Commission to provide a model of low-income housing to municipalities across Canada in the post-World War One period. The planning of the suburb and the design of its houses reveal many of the ideological premises of the urban reform movement in Canada, and of the federal government's attitude toward publicly subsidized housing, in this early period of social welfare. Modern theories of rationalization, efficiency, and standardization, combined with late Victorian notions about physical, social and moral health, to produce housing designs that were technologically modern yet ideologically traditional.

Résumé

La cité jardin de Lindenlea, en banlieue d'Ottawa, a été construite après la Première Guerre mondiale. Conçue par Thomas Adams, elle est l'oeuvre de la Commission fédérale de l'habitation, qui y voyait un modèle d'habitat à loyer modique à proposer aux municipalités canadiennes. La conception des logements et le plan d'aménagement, manifestement inspirés de l'idéologie de la réforme urbaine, sont très révélateurs de l'attitude du gouvernement fédéral à l'égard du logement subventionné en cette période où l'État commence à peine à intervenir dans la domaine social. Les idées modernes de rationalisation, d'efficacité et de standardisation, conjuguées aux notions de santé physique, sociale et morale caractéristiques de la fin de l'ère victorienne, ont donné naissance à des logements modernes sur le plan technique mais traditionnels sur le plan idéologique.

The garden suburb of Lindenlea today stands between the communities of New Edinburgh and Vanier, in Ottawa, as an example of housing and planning theories prevalent in Canada following World War One. The suburb was one of the first low-income housing developments built under the aegis of the Federal Housing Scheme (1918), which was itself the first major federal intervention in the area of housing in Canadian history.¹ The creation of Lindenlea and of the Federal Housing Scheme are also linked through the involvement of certain members of the Commission of Conservation, a federal-provincial advisory committee, with ideological associations to the Urban Reform Movement of Canada and the Garden City Movement of England.

Officially built by the Ottawa Housing Commission, Lindenlea's principle design features and standards were largely the creation of Thomas Adams, the Town Planning Advisor to the Commission of Conservation and to the Housing Committee of the Federal Cabinet. Adams played a key role in the development of the Federal Housing Scheme legislation, and subsequently chose Lindenlea to serve as a model design to be emulated by other municipalities participating in the Scheme. Lindenlea is therefore an excellent example for an analysis and understanding of the prevalent and official standards and ideas for appropriate housing types in Canada, during this important early period in the development of the state as social regulator.

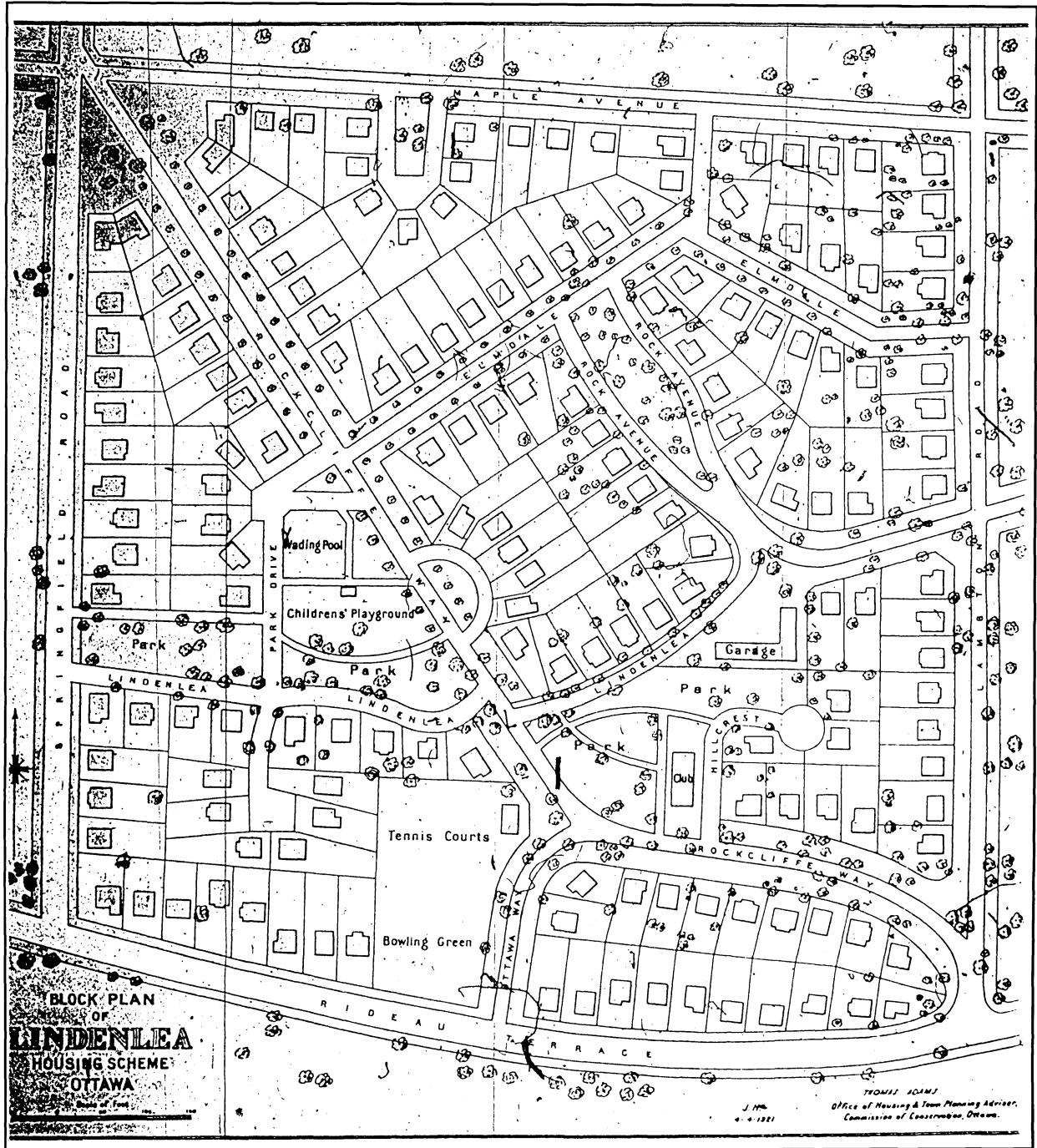
The rapid expansion of Canadian industries and cities made existing slum conditions in the core areas more visible and menacing than in the late 19th century. The urban reformers in Canada, especially those of the Commission of Conservation, concentrated on improv-

ing the sanitation, overcrowding and poor construction of slum dwellings, and battled exploitive rents and real estate speculation, all of which were felt to contribute to disease and moral decay. The fundamental social influence of the growth of the applied sciences, especially the obsession for rationalization in the later 19th century, should be considered of prime importance in understanding this movement. In their rhetoric, the Progressives in Canada and the United States relied heavily on the ideas of 'scientific management' of the home, and a rational approach to life in general. Standards became an essential part of their program, and were based on the ideas of efficiency, modernization and the advantages of mass production and industrialization. The changes were approached universally, from urban and regional planning, through domestic architecture, to interior decorating and consumer products for the home.

In 1909 the formation of the Commission of Conservation provided an important conduit between the reform movement and the federal government. The Commission was concerned with the efficient and economical use of the nation's resources, including human life. The Commission adopted progressive doctrines, and pushed the notion of 'scientific management' in its publication, the *Conservation of Life*.² Clifford Sifton, head of the Commission, preached the 'new gospel' of public health under the guidance of "the light of science and modern sanitary methods," as being "at the root of all happiness."³ The journal was to become the leading government voice regarding urban reform and housing, always with a strong emphasis on public and moral health.

The physical and social formation of the houses built at Lindenlea came to be a

Lindenlea: (Ottawa) The Garden Suburb, 1918-24



Plan of Lindenlea, Journal of the Town Planning Institute of Canada. (April 1921)



mechanism by which the reformers attempted to regain control of the urban environment, and return it to a state of 'normalcy.' The creation of the Federal Housing Scheme provided an opportunity for these reformers to translate their ideas into built form in garden suburbs such as Lindenlea, but the suburb's manifestation should be seen as also reflecting broader cultural precepts of the period. In this article the house as constructed at Lindenlea is viewed as an attempt to realize the Canadian bourgeois myth, to create a homogeneous environment in which a homogeneous society would exist.

The idea of home that was present in Canada in the early 20th century was based in the liberal value system which

forms the cornerstone of Western political, social and economic practices, and of the reformers' platform.⁴ The association between the idea of 'home' and the liberal value system lies in the latter's all-encompassing respect for the right of property, as gained by individual labour. This right was felt to benefit not only the individual, but the collective society as well, and so private homeownership became a key principle of early urban reform. The house was to become the major economic and symbolic element in Canadian middle-class life, but the symbolic character of the privately-owned home was equally intense for the working class.⁵ The private home was a place of haven from the vagaries of the outside world, from the instability of rented accommodation, and possibly from the

bounds of their social class. As an item of personal gain and private consumption, the home long stood as an important signifier of personal expression in Canadian culture.⁶ However, with the middle class in Canada as the largest group of home owners in this period, the effect was a normalization of this significant aspect, in which private home ownership and identification became a necessary condition of participating in a broader homogenized society. In Lindenlea, this paradoxical notion was evinced in both the stylistic form of the houses and in the forms of social action which were hoped would take place within this formal environment.

The federal government's guarded economic participation in the production

Lindenlea: (Ottawa) The Garden Suburb, 1918–24

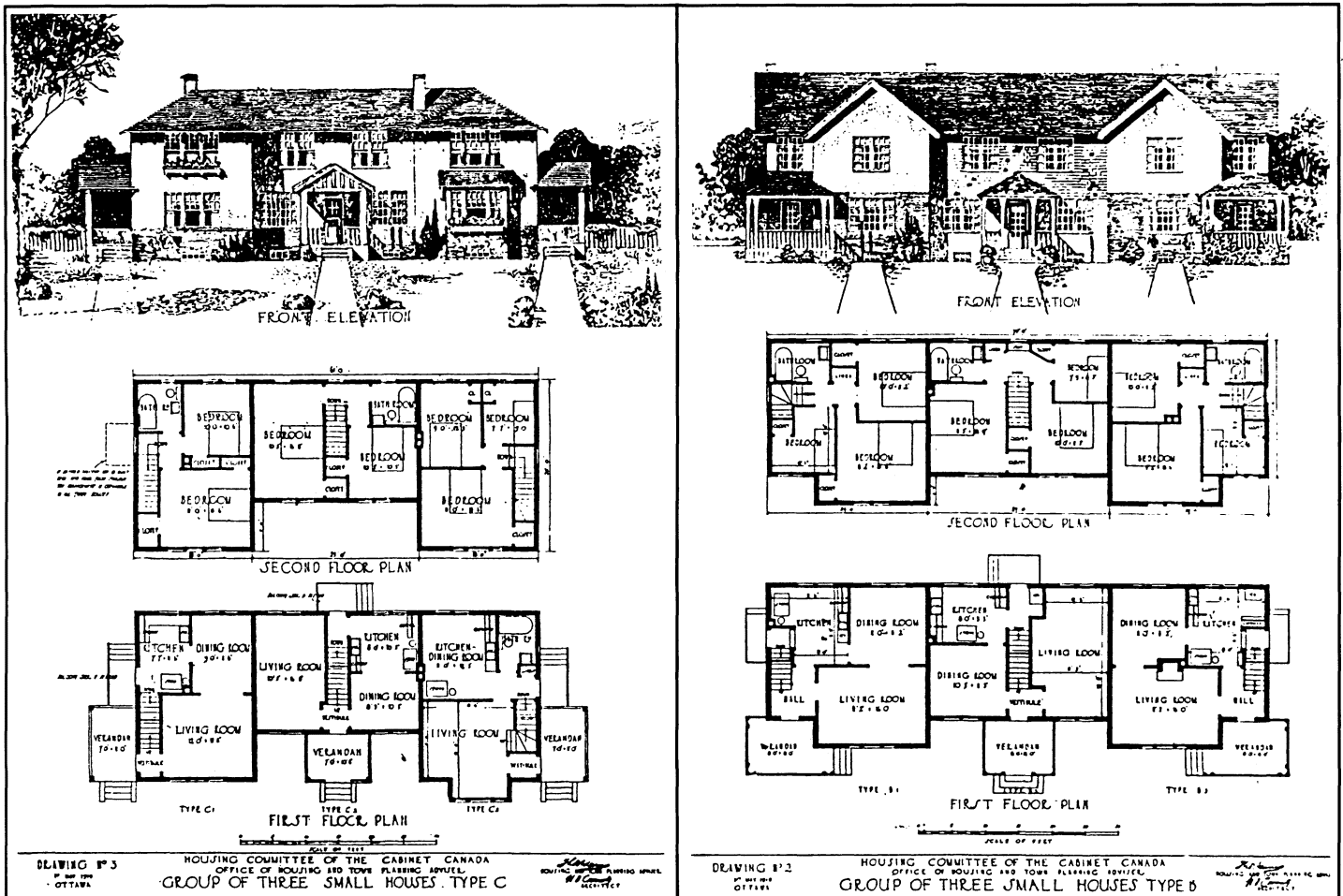
of housing projects such as Lindenlea, through the Federal Housing Scheme, further reflects the liberal ideology of the period. The state was to play a minimal, but specific role; to protect the right of private ownership, but not to regulate it.⁷ By establishing funds for the production of private housing through low-rate mortgages and loans, the government provided an opportunity for broader home ownership. At another level, the Scheme reinforced rather than competed with the prevalent system of private capital, through a bolstering of the construction industry, and the use of the banks in administering its loans and mortgages. The reformers and legislators of the time largely recognized that the private owner-

ship of property would reinforce the existing economic, political and social system, by investing the new home owner with a special interest in maintaining the system under which he had become a private owner.⁸ Home ownership thereby became an apparatus by which the liberal value system could be both stabilized and maintained.

The image of women and their place in the home during this period was also to have a major impact in the conception of appropriate house form. The image was based upon traditional middle-class attitudes, in which the home was viewed as a place of retreat from the incivilities of the outside world, as a place in which

the moral content of life could be controlled and the wife/mother and children could be kept safe and content. The rapid urbanization and industrialization, as well as the disruptive character of World War One, served to heighten this idealized image in the minds of the urban reformers. The growth of industry as a significant employer of the urban working class was largely blamed for the disruption of the 'traditional' family, as the work environment for women and children shifted increasingly from home to factory.⁹ The war only exacerbated this situation, and it was during this period that large numbers of middle-class women began to enter the work force. This situation continued to be accepted





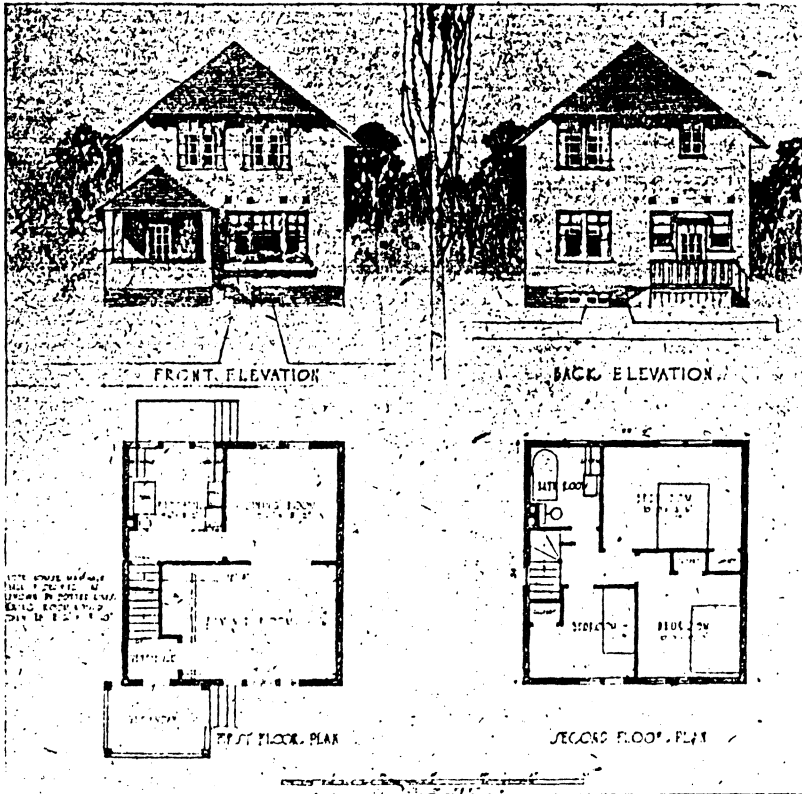
"Housing Suggestions by the Housing Committee of the Cabinet, Canada." Journal of the AIA, (August, 1919); The Builder (July, 1919)..

after the end of the war, but only under specific conditions. The working woman of the middle class was overwhelmingly single, and her employment was usually considered temporary, as stop-gap measure until marriage, when she would begin her real career at home.¹⁰ It was in this sense that the conjuncture between the realities of the social condition of women and the image of women in the minds of the reformers became an important aspect in the development of hous-

ing form. A temporary foray into the working world was even considered to be a positive step by the 1920s, for "a few years of business experience . . . serve to make [a woman] a more efficient home-maker, a more companionable wife, and a better balanced mother."¹¹

The rise of home economics as a part of the formal education process for women at this time was no coincidence. The rationalization of the architecture of the

home and its keeper were closely integrated. The move to make the homemaker more efficient through work experience went hand in hand with the reformers program of making her into a 'scientific manager' as well, often through home economics classes and university programs.¹² The position of housewife was portrayed as a career which required training and dedication. The efficient and morally upright home could not be properly maintained by an amateur,



Canadian Government Housing Scheme—Single House, Type A.

Mr. W. D. CROMARTY, Architect. (Mr. THOMAS ADAMS, Housing and Town-Planning Adviser to the Canadian Government.) (See p 36)

"Housing Suggestions by the Housing Committee of the Cabinet, Canada; Journal of the AIA (August, 1919): The Builder (July, 1919).

while the 'professional' homemaker should not have had to expect anything less than a professionally designed environment in which to do her work. This environment tended to be prescriptive, demanding a standardized set of actions from the housewife and leaving her little room to maintain an independent mode of living.

The urban reformers, largely members of the middle-class, and male more often than not, seemed to sense a threat to their traditional social environment in the urbanization and industrialization of Canada, and sought ways to remedy this situation. Their attempt to revitalize the institution of the middle-class family was facilitated in part by their acceptance of the temporary work life of the young single woman. But as Suzanne Mackenzie points out, the bourgeois also fought against any further articulation of these working-class forms by creating an even greater separation between work and home, both physically and socially, than that created by the industrial revolution.¹³ The creation of the suburbs was in some sense a reactionary heightening of the myth of the ideal home, and of the myth of the woman and the family, in an effort to retain the preferred traditional practices. Both were isolated from the uncontrolled progress of urbanization, resulting in an intermixing and interchange of the values applied to each. The home was a place of "restfulness, privacy, non-work" and sentimentalization, and these values came to be ascribed to the women as well, thus naturalizing her role as home-maker.¹⁴ Just as the home became a personal expression for the male owner, the woman, and her success in her roles as home-maker, wife, and mother became part of this expression as well.¹⁵

As the crisis in housing mounted during the War, the reformers of the Commission

Lindenlea: (Ottawa) The Garden Suburb, 1918-24



of Conservation began to look seriously for someone to help them provide concrete solutions. Thomas Adams appeared as the messenger. He came to live in Canada during and for a short period following the war. Adams was an advocate of the Garden City Movement in Britain, originated by Patrick Geddes and Ebenezer Howard. These men had been part of the radical reform movement in England in the late 19th century which sought a nonviolent means of effecting real social changes in that country. The Garden City model, developed between 1889 and 1892, presented a possible solution. The Garden City was a highly organized community that would be situated in the centre of an agricultural greenbelt. The principle of access to open space was declared to be one of the fundamental rights of mankind by reformers of the period. This belief co-existed in Howard's theories with a strong antipathy to land speculation, which he regarded as the root of the problems of the capitalist economic system. Once the ability to make money through land was removed through state regulation, the capitalist system could once again become balanced.¹⁶



Most of the above principles can be found in Adam's agenda for the development of town planning in Canada, although the opportunity to create an organized community was obviously somewhat limited in the case of Lindenlea.¹⁷ Adams' strong functionalist streak, however, made him appealing to middle-class Canadians. While maintaining his reformist position regarding the need to provide better living conditions for the workers, he could appeal to the business community by emphasizing the economic basis of the reformed city, and his primary concern that the town plan should facilitate and improve the condi-



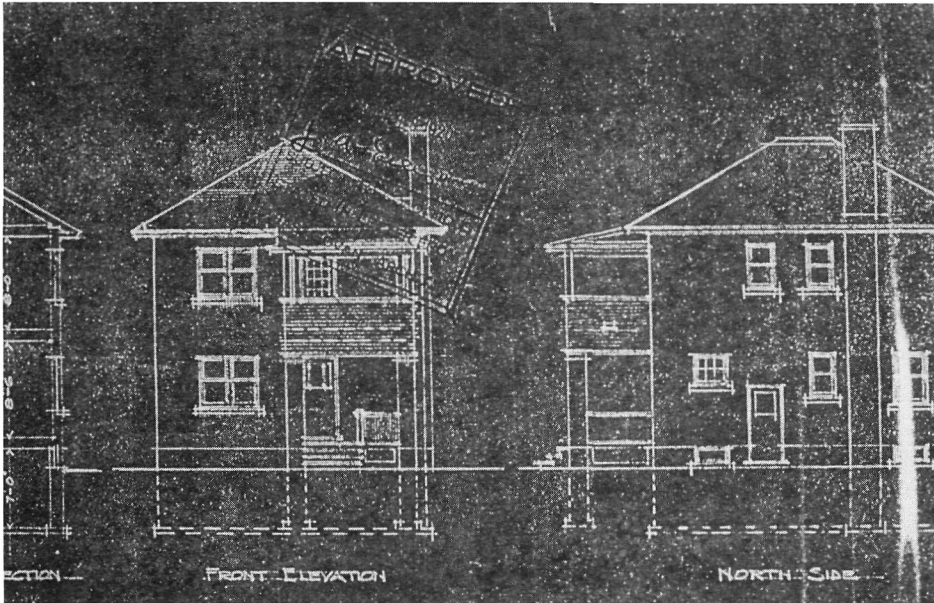
tions of the business and industrial environment as well.¹⁸ Adams was thus able to incorporate the interests of business, the reformers and the government.¹⁹

By 1918, the demand for the federal government to do something about the housing situation was becoming both too loud and too justified to be ignored. The costs of building had increased beyond the war-time inflation, causing a virtual standstill in house construction during this period.²⁰ And the expectation of having somewhere to house the returning soldiers, many with new families, in their own homes, was seen to be the least the country could do to reward their efforts overseas. Adams and the Com-

mission of Conservation pressed for government involvement in the housing problem, recommending the building of new communities for soldiers along the Garden City principles. The town of Lens, Saskatchewan was the sole result of this suggestion. Most other suggestions were not as radical, or as expensive. Various schemes were presented by members of the government as the war appeared to be winding down in 1918. They were largely based in short term programmes that would offer low-interest loans to individual buyers or builders. The thought of subsidized public housing on a national scale was not considered for numerous reasons, including of course, the possible cost involved to the federal government.²¹ If the

federal government was to become involved in the actual home-building process, it could be only at the emergency or model level. Canada was to remain a 'property-owning democracy', for this enhanced social stability and the desire to work.²²

The government requested that Thomas Adams, as Planning Advisor to the Commission of Conservation, prepare a report for review. From this initiative came the Federal Housing Scheme. There were two essential aims of the Scheme. It was intended to serve the advancement of the nation by the provision of a better living environment for the soldiers and the poorly housed working class, improving their moral and physical well being. It was also



Elevations. House for M.M. Reid. Lindenlea. Ottawa Housing Commission Papers. City of Ottawa Archives.

to provide a boost to the construction industry, through the provision of low-interest loans by the Federal government (through the Provinces) to municipalities or individuals, with which to build low-cost private homes.²³ The legislation was pushed through under the War Measures Act, in effect labelling it as a temporary, emergency scheme.²⁴

When the City of Ottawa declared its intentions to develop the site of Lindenlea, Thomas Adams became directly involved in the project, and decided to make it into a model development. The decision by Adams to involve himself directly in the design of Lindenlea reveals an understanding that the success of such a reform project could not consist solely of economic aid and general directive policies. The type and form of the house and the site were felt to be at least as important as the opportunity for purchase. Lindenlea was built as a suburb for lower

income Canadians, but was carefully modelled after the current middle-class preferences.

The site planning of Lindenlea is in many ways as important to our understanding of the informing discourse of the period as the designs of the houses themselves. Thomas Adams personally designed the layout of the suburb. He followed closely the design principles of the Garden City Movement, creating a small and intimate community that has withstood absorption by Ottawa to this day. Adams made full use of site eccentricities, as well as the Garden City fondness for curving street, cul de sacs, and tree lined boulevards, if on a necessarily smaller scale. The plan also provided for the setting aside of ten percent of the land for parks and recreational sites, such as tennis courts and bowling greens. Rockcliffe Way was planned as the main traffic artery, cutting diagonally through the site, but effort was

made to keep through traffic to a minimum.²⁵ While the desired effect of such garden city planning was a picturesque community, the theory was influenced strongly by the modernist tendencies of the combination of utility and nature, and the beauty found therein.

Lindenlea was divided into 168 lots, all roughly the same size, but of varying shapes according to their location. Adams and his assistants were quite concerned about the placement of the houses on these individual lots.²⁶ An article in the April, 1921 issue of the *Journal of the Town Planning Institute of Canada* regarding the plan of Lindenlea, expressed concern about the need for "proper discrimination shown in the types of buildings erected, particularly in the design of those occupying strategic points and vistas at the ends of streets."²⁷ The same article criticizes many of the houses thus far built at Lindenlea as unattractive, and unsuited for their particular lots. Adams was to disassociate himself from the project in 1920 because of conflicts with the Ottawa Housing Commission regarding just this issue.

The Ottawa Housing Commission went to some lengths to give the project flexibility. Thus, after selecting their lots, home owners could choose from five or six different house plans. Some owners even brought in their own plans, although this was not encouraged. The Commission's flexibility reflects a general acknowledgement of the desire and even need for individual expression through house form, if the program of incorporation of the working class into mainstream Canadian society was to be successful. It certainly would have been less expensive to build totally standardized units, as the Europeans were doing at the time. However, while the

designers of Lindenlea adopted certain modernist tenets of building technology and standards, the aspects of individual identity and a picturesque setting remained fundamental principles. Thomas Adams laid out clear provisions regarding the standards to be used in the design of Lindenlea. These standards appear in an article in the *Journal of the American Institute of Architects* of June 1919.

Provision should be made for securing ample garden — and air — space surrounding the dwellings to be erected. In cities and towns, each dwelling should occupy a lot comprising at least 1800 square feet. . . . Not less than 50 feet of clear open space in depth should be provided at the rear of dwellings, and the buildings should not occupy more than 50 per cent of the lot . . .²⁸

Considering these 'recommendations', it would have been very difficult to build anything other than a suburban style development. The standards were in keeping with the reformers' attitudes regarding the health and moral needs of the working class. Education was of course a major part of their program, but without the proper living environment, all this effort would be for naught. Physical health and morality were closely linked by the reformers and the public health officials, influenced by current theories dominated by scientific and rational thinking. Charles Hodgetts, the medical advisor to the Commission of Conservation declared that, "light, air and water are the birthright of every man, woman and child in Canada." He also tied poor housing conditions to national concerns by blaming those conditions for

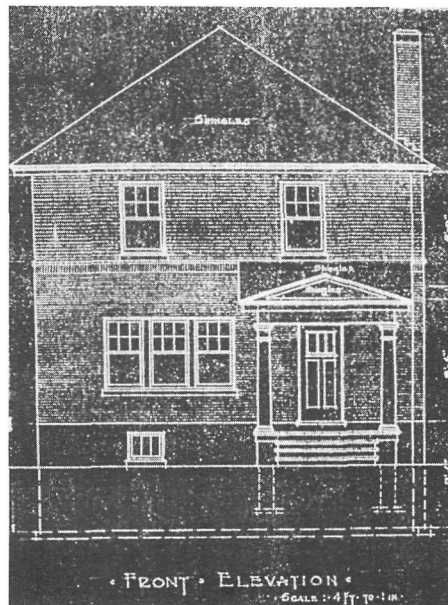
[the] decreased efficiency of the people to the point where one in three

men are unfit . . . to fight the battle for freedom and honour . . . unfit to efficiently assist to build this nation in its struggle for supremacy in the markets of the world.²⁹

The reformers were thus not purely philanthropic in their concerns, but were fighting a battle against the threat of the deterioration of their middle-class values, ideals and goals.

Housing Form At Lindenlea

In the summer of 1919 the *Journal of the American Institute of Architects* and the British journal *Builder*, both published drawings of the model designs produced by the architect working under Adams, W.D. Cromarty. The JAIA labelled these plans as "Housing Suggestions by the Housing Committee of the Cabinet, Canada," but neither journal provided additional commentary or in-

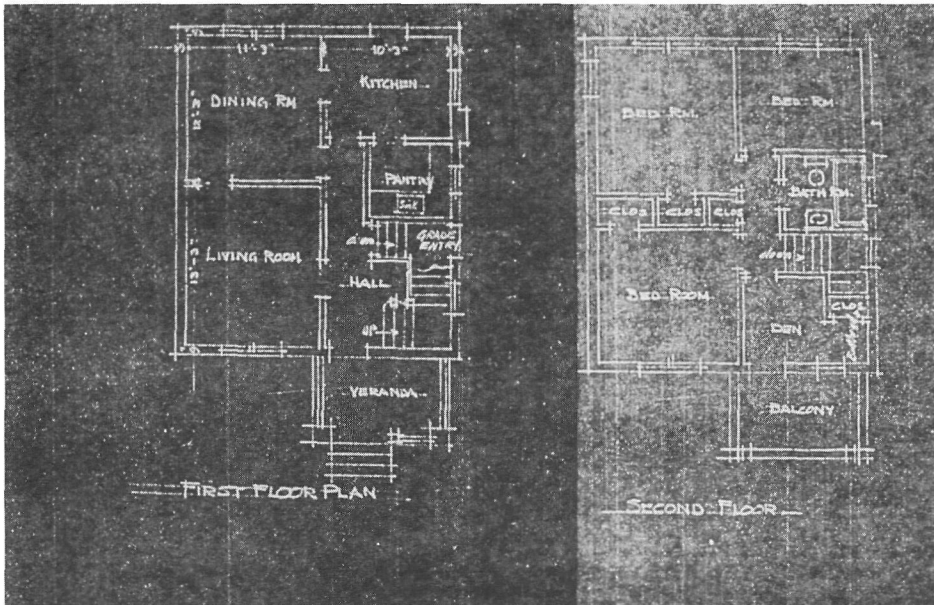


Elevation. House for C.A. Menard, Lindenlea. Ottawa Housing Commission Papers. City of Ottawa Archives.

formation on the plans. Part of Adams' suggestions always had included the provision of grouped houses as well as detached, but Lindenlea was developed and built strictly as a suburb of single detached houses. The grouped or row house was not a common or popular type for middle-class Canadians, and may have been rejected by the Ottawa Housing Commission as an inappropriate type for its project.

Diversity of materials in exterior finishings was allowed for by both the federal and provincial housing authorities, and the housing at Lindenlea reflects this. Brick and stucco were the most popular materials, often in combination. Although the preferences of the federal government are not known, the Ontario guidelines recommended brick, hollow tile, stone or concrete, with stucco, shingles or clapboard deemed acceptable as well.³⁰ Virtually all of the houses designed for Lindenlea were two storey, and all provided a front or side verandah or porch. Many had second storey balconies or sleeping porches. This was in keeping with the current theories on hygiene, which encouraged as much fresh air in the house as possible. Of course this recommendation had two corollary effects. Housekeeping books recommended daily airing of rooms and bed linens, while the open windows increased dust in the house. Thus the conscientious housewife could add two more chores to her daily list.

This emphasis on fresh air, in combination with the push for sunlight in every room, also led to changes in house design, especially in low income shelter. One of the major complaints of urban reformers regarding tenements was the lack of ventilation and light in the units. The standards provided by both the federal and provincial governments included strict regulations



Plan. House for M.M. Reid. Lindenlea. Ottawa Housing Commission Papers. City of Ottawa Archives.

about combatting these perceived evils. Minimum space requirements between buildings were set out, generally following suburban standards. Within the design of the house itself, the federal government demanded that, "every habitable room should have at least one window opening to the outer air. Each room should have a window space of at least one-tenth the floor area, and cross ventilation should be provided where practicable."³¹ This predilection for windows is apparent in the designs of the houses for Lindenlea. Every design includes a large, usually tripartite window in the living room or parlour. Many have basement windows, although basements were strictly forbidden for habitation. Very few of the plans are more than two rooms deep, providing the opportunity for windows on two sides of the room, and thus better cross ventilation.

But there were other more socially motivated reasons for the provision of more window space and sunlight in the homes of low-income families. The Ontario guideline book provides the following inspiring tale.

Family consisting of father, mother and six children. House had been neglected so long by landlord that walls and paint were in very dirty condition, front steps broken, windows out and altogether house presented a very dilapidated condition. Woman had apparently lost all interest in children and home. Children usually dirty and only half clothed. House filthy. About two months ago the whole family with the exception of the father were taken ill with diphtheria and sent to Isolation hospital. Our Division, through efforts of the Division of Housing, succeeded in bringing force to bear on the landlord with the result that he

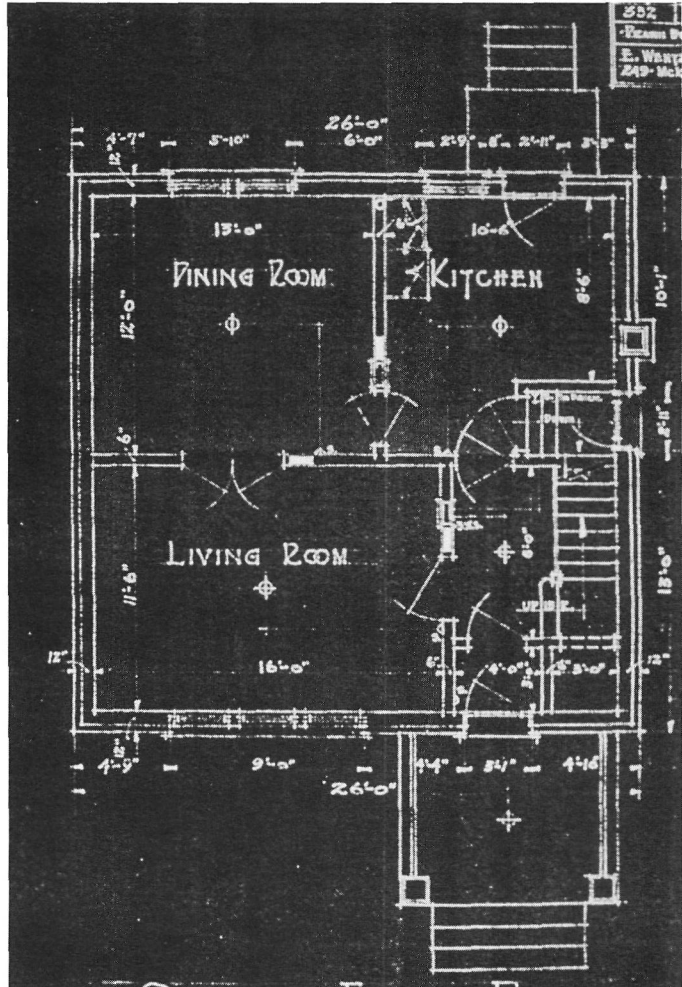
had the house renovated, papered, painted and repaired before the woman and children were discharged from the hospital. Now the woman takes very good care of the home and children, who for the first time are clean, and go to school quite regularly.³²

Through the provision of a 'normal' environment then, these families had learned to participate in their society in the correct manner, by getting jobs, going to school, and especially by keeping the house up to middle-class standards.

Besides the change in appearance of houses through such things as additional windows, aesthetic changes were made as well. These changes were also based on theories promoting rationalization, efficiency and economy in all aspects of life. The decorative excesses of 1890s domestic Canadian architecture are nowhere apparent in the architecture of the post-War era. The modernist aesthetic would not fully appear in Canadian architecture until the 1930s, but the influences of mass production, standardization and simplicity of lines were felt in Canadian architecture nonetheless. The massing of the houses in Lindenlea is generally quite simple, often a foursquare plan with a front porch, to minimize exterior wall space, and thus reduce costs. Decorative woodwork around eaves, doors and windows is gone, as is any overt decorative brickwork, particularly voussoirs, polychrome or three-dimensional banding, or chimney work. Porches and verandas have either square or simple Doric posts, and small undecorated pediments, if there is one at all. Window sills are usually concrete, and shutters were probably added later. The most common decorative element seems to be minimal half timbering on houses finished in stucco. The overall

appearance of the houses is of a subdued Arts and Crafts style, following the English Garden City prototypes. A letter from Thomas Adams to the Ottawa Housing Commission's architect F.E. Belfry confirms the desire for simplicity in the exterior design, "The bands on stucco work should not be included, but plain scheme of brick and rough cast stucco preferable."³³

Adams tried to exercise a general aesthetic control over the designs for Lindenlea in the beginning although he was not an architect, and did not have any designated power to do so. He comments in the same letter about the "balance of the windows" in some designs, suggesting that "a flat canopy is much more in keeping with the elevation" and to "get door more nearly under centre of window" on another type submitted for his approval. Much of the correspondence between Adams and Belfry suggests that Adams was very concerned with the overall appearance of the suburb. In particular he often refers to the need to design and build the houses so that the roof lines were at the same level throughout and that the suitability of a house design and its intended lot be carefully considered. The rationalization of architecture that was taking place in this period had stripped the form of most of the ornament which had been used as a mode of expression in the 19th century. Thus the placement of windows and the continuity of roof lines became an important aesthetic concern. Adams' concern over such aesthetic details should not be trivialized, for once again it indicates the cultural values that were instilled in the architecture of these houses by the reform movement. One of the most common housing types found at Lindenlea was the front gambrel roof type. This style was popular in Ontario from at least the late 19th century. Thus maintenance of



Plan. House for C.A. Menard. Lindenlea. Ottawa Housing Commission Papers. City of Ottawa Archives

tradition was possible through its reappropriation. It was also probably one of the more economic styles to build, since its low roof line and square plan would reduce the costs of exterior cladding.

The rationalization program that had its effect in the stripping down of the exterior was to play an equally important role in influencing the design of the interior. Especially in the low cost homes, any vestiges of the eccentricity of the Victorian plan was eradicated. Most of the homes built at Lindenlea were square in plan, and this immediately lessened the opportunity for an imaginative play with spatial effects. The typical plan was quartered on both levels. The downstairs consisted of an entrance hall with stairway quarter, and relatively equally sized living rooms, dining rooms and kitchens. The upstairs consisted of two large bedrooms, and two smaller ones, which shared their quarters with a bathroom and the staircase. Most plans opted for a side hall entrance, which allowed better isolation of the living rooms, and more direct access to the kitchen at the rear of the house.

One of the most revolutionary features of these working class homes was the required inclusion of built-in closets. While built-in closets had become more prevalent in middle and upper class homes in the early years of the 20th century, they were not a frequent feature of tenement houses.³⁴ Closets were deemed by the reformers as necessary to maintain a clean and efficient home and person. All plans were required to have closets in each bedroom, and most had hall closets as well. Bathrooms were also undergoing major changes. All plans available for Lindenlea show a consolidated bathroom, with a built-in tub, sink and toilet in a single room. This was a shift from older houses, or the

European model, which often had a separate water closet.

Built-in cupboards were not to be found in the kitchens of Lindenlea. More expensive houses of the period did include this recent innovation, but the cost was probably prohibitive for Lindenlea. The boom in domestic sciences and education of the late 19th and early 20th centuries played a major part in the changing role of the kitchen, as well as new expectations of the housewife. The kitchen was no longer the central activity space of the middle-class home. It became in the minds of the reformers, a 'laboratory' for the specific use of preparing healthy and hygienic food for the family.³⁵ Many feminists have pointed to this shift as a further isolation of the wife from the family, and from the social realm in general. The housewife was the 'master of the kitchen', helped supposedly by her new electric appliances.

The size of the kitchen was often reduced as well, due once again to its specific use, and to aid in the efficiency of housework. But the kitchens of Lindenlea are still primitive in their minimality by our modern standards. The only built-in feature was the sink. There were no cupboards, and no counter space, and certainly no appliances included in any of the drawings. The pantry has also diminished in size or completely disappeared, leaving one to wonder where the homemaker was expected to keep her food. All the kitchens did have at least one window, plus a door letting on to a back stoop or directly to the garden.³⁶

The houses at Lindenlea were to serve as models for the building of economical housing in Canadian municipalities, yet the attention that Adams gave to the elevation and floor plan details shows tremendous concern for the provision of

a highly 'modern' standard of living environment. The dominance of these formal concerns in the final design of the suburb, and the resulting failure of Lindenlea to provide housing for the most needy in Ottawa, raises questions about just why the issue of affordability was subverted and essentially defeated in this project. Why, for instance were virtually all the homes designed and built at Lindenlea of two storeys? And why was there no attempt to build group houses, although this had been proposed as an ideal solution by both the federal and provincial housing committees? The 'cottage flats' built by the Toronto Housing Company on Spruce Court, Bain Avenue and Riverdale Court around 1913-1914, are excellent examples of this type, incorporating many of the modern features found in the houses at Lindenlea.³⁷ Surely these forms would have proven much more economical to construct. The Ottawa Housing Commission was censured by the Housing Branch of the Ontario Bureau of Municipal Affairs for its seeming lack of concern about the cost overruns of its houses. The Housing Branch blamed many of the future problems of Lindenlea on this initial indifference.³⁸

In order to answer these questions even perfunctorily, it would seem necessary to return to Lindenlea's role as a model garden suburb community. While this role makes the suburb an ideal subject of analysis, due to its necessarily strong reflection of the ideals of the groups involved in the suburbs creation, it may have placed limits on the parameters of Lindenlea's site planning and architecture. Lindenlea was an ideal community model, built to reflect the highest hopes of the federal government, the Commission of Conservation, Ottawa Housing Commission, and not least of all Thomas Adams. The provision of traditional, middle-class housing forms within an en-

environment considered acceptable for all classes (the garden suburb), would appear in this context to be the most appropriate solution to the problem. The three or four styles which predominate at Lindenlea are essentially stripped down and smaller versions of popular Canadian domestic architecture of the time. Rationalization and the theories of scientific management and hygiene did play a major role in the development of the housing forms of this period, and of Lindenlea as a result. In Canada, however, this did not result in a rejection, parallel to that of Europe's, of the traditional in favour of Modernism, but rather in a rejuvenation of the traditional forms and ideals, to serve the modern theories. The reformers were willing to embrace the new theories on hygiene and health, which were essentially the same as those influential on the modernist architects of Europe. But the social and moral agenda in Canada was still centred around late Victorian ideals. And while the major influence on Lindenlea and other housing reform projects of the period came from the Garden City Movement in Great Britain, Lindenlea is not a miniature Letchworth or Port Sunlight. The contrast between the exterior and interior designs of the houses at Lindenlea is most informative in this regard. The houses of Lindenlea follow the interior planning concepts of Adam's designs for the Federal Housing Committee, as presented in the JAIA and *The Builder*, but revert to a reinterpretation of more traditional Canadian stylizations (such as the gambrel roof) on the exterior.

However, the sole use of the double-storey, detached house at Lindenlea also reflects a more problematic result than aesthetic and social homogeneity. The reformers, while intent on providing a middle-class environment for their clients, effectively excluded low-income

earners from participation. A large percentage of the houses at Lindenlea were bought or built by civil servants, who certainly could not be considered to come from the low-income stratus. The houses at Lindenlea were priced between three thousand and forty-five hundred dollars, and this was well beyond the price range of the most needy. The majority of those desperate for decent housing would not have even been able to afford the down payment required (only veterans were exempt from this requirement).³⁹

This was perhaps the major failing of Lindenlea. The development was to become the subject of various controversies and scandals during its building, but none of these really concerned the basic flaw of unattainability by those it sought (in the official rhetoric) to help.⁴⁰ Although it would have been possible to develop and build housing in which the lower-income citizens of Ottawa could afford to live (if not own), this would have meant a drastic compromise in the standards, aesthetic and otherwise, set by the federal government and the reformers. The original purpose of Lindenlea, to provide decent, low-cost housing to those in need, had become obscured by a complex combination of aesthetic and social preconceptions. The rationalism and scientific management which was hailed by the reformers as the solution to Canada's urban social and moral woes became submerged into a style of new traditionalism.

Notes

1. There were earlier interventions in this area, including the Toronto Housing Company, a philanthropic limited dividend company started in 1911 by members of the Toronto Civic Guild, and the Ontario Housing.
2. Michael Simpson, Thomas Adams and the Modern Planning Movement: Britain, Canada and the United States, 1900–1940 (London and New

York: Alexandrine Press Book, Mansell, 1985): 3.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
4. Kamal Sayegh, *Housing: A Canadian Perspective* Ottawa: Academy Books, (1987): 118.
5. Deryk W. Holdsworth, "House and Home in Vancouver: Images of West Coast Urbanism, 1886–1929," in eds. Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F. J. Artibise *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban and Social History* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press): 187–209.
6. Sayegh, p. 119.
7. Sayegh, p. 118.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 119. The reinforcement of the capitalist system through the incorporation of the working class came to be of special interest in Canada in this period, following the 1917 Russian Revolution.
9. Suzanne Mackenzie, "Building women, Building Cities: Toward Gender Sensitive Theory in the Environmental Disciplines," in eds. Caroline Andrews and Beth Moore Milroy, *Life Spaces: Gender, Household, Employment* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press 1988): 13–30.
10. Mary Vipond, "The Image of Women in Canadian Mass Circulation Magazines in the 1920s," *Modernist Studies: Literature and Culture 1920–1940* vol. 1 no. 3 (1974–75): 5–14. See also Veronica Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled: Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada, 1919–1939*. (Toronto: Penguin, 1988): Chapter Two, "Working for Pay".
11. *Ibid.*, 5–14.
12. *Ibid.*, 5–14.
13. Mackenzie, p. 20.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
15. Vipond.
16. Robert Fishman, *Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century: Ebenezer Howard, Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier* (Cambridge, Mas.: MIT Press 1982): 40–48.
17. For information on other projects by Thomas Adams see; Michael Simpson, *Thomas Adams and the Modern Planning Movement: Britain, Canada, and the United States, 1900–1940* (London and New York: Alexandrine Press Book, Mansell, 1985; John C. Weaver, "Reconstruction of the Richmond District in Halifax: A Canadian Episode in Public Housing and Town Planning, 1918–1921," *Plan Canada*

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- (Vol. 16, March 1976): 36–47.
18. Simpson, p. 79.
 19. While Adams incorporated the interests of the reformers, it is more difficult to categorically state whether he did the same for the working class itself. The reformers were patronizing, to put it mildly, and rarely bothered to ask the workers what their opinion was in the matter.
 20. "The Housing Problem and Production," *Conservation of Life* Vol. IV no. 3 (July, 1918): 49–57.
 21. The rebuilding of Halifax homes destroyed by the explosion was subsidized by the federal government, and may be considered an important exception to federal policy. See John C. Weaver, "Reconstruction of the Richmond District on Halifax: A Canadian Episode in Public Housing and Town Planning, 1918–1921," *Plan Canada* (Vol. 16, March 1976): 36–47.
 22. Simpson, p. 95.
 23. Andrew Eric Jones, *Beginnings of Federal Government Housing Policy, 1918–1924* (Centre for Social Welfare Studies, Carleton University, Ottawa), *Occasional Paper No. 1/78* (1978): 12. The cost limit set by the Ontario Housing Act was four thousand dollars. Letter from J. A. Ellis, Director, Housing Branch, Bureau of Municipal Affairs, Ontario, to the Ottawa Housing Commission, June 30, 1922. City of Ottawa Archives, RG 20/3, 144.
 24. The Scheme was discontinued by the Meighen government in 1924.
 25. Thomas Adams, "Report on the Planning and Development of the Lindenlea Estate, Ottawa," to Ottawa Housing Commission, July 25, 1919. City of Ottawa Archives, RG 22.
 26. *Ibid.*
 27. "Proposed or Completed Developments: Site Planning at Lindenlea, Ottawa," *Journal of the Town Planning Institute of Canada* (April 1921): 4–5. It should be noted here that Thomas Adams was the founder and first president of the Institute, and that a close associate of his was the editor of the journal. The town planning community of Canada, such as it was, was very tight, and most professionals were in complete agreement with Adams' plans and designs.
 28. "Housing Activities Around the World: Housing in Canada; notes from the Government Statement," *Journal of the American Institute of Architects*, (Vol. VII no. 6, June, 1919): 271–274.
 29. In his article, "Housing and Health," Charles Hodgetts, quoted Sir John Simon, Medical Health Officer of the Privy Council in England, who in 1866 stated, "When overcrowding exists in a sanitary sense, it almost always exists even more promiscuously in certain moral senses...." *Canadian Municipal Journal* (March, 1920): 86–86, 93.
 30. Ontario Housing Committee, p. 22.
 31. JAIA, "Housing Activities Around the World: Housing in Canada"; note from the government statement.
 32. *Report of the Ontario Housing Committee: Including Standards for Inexpensive Houses Adopted for Ontario and Typical Plans printed by order of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario*, (Toronto: A. T. Wilgress, 1919): 52.
 33. Thomas Adams, letter, June 27, 1919.
 34. Gwendolyn Wright, *Moralism and the Model Home: Domestic Architecture and Cultural Conflict in Chicago, 1873–1913*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980): 245.
 35. Gwendolyn Wright, "Sweet and Clean: The Domestic Landscape in the Progressive Era," *Landscape* (Vol. 20 no. 1 October, 1975): 38–43.
 36. For an informative description of the typical middle class and working class home environments in the 1920s see Veronica Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled: Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada, 1919–1939*.
 37. Craick, "Cottage Flats in Toronto."
 38. Letter from J. A. Ellis to the Ottawa Housing Commission, June 30, 1922.
 39. Cassie Doyle, *Municipal Initiatives in Housing 1900–1970: The City of Ottawa* (The City of Ottawa, 1982): 14–15.
 40. Many of the problems at Lindenlea developed due to poor construction and lax on-site supervision. In later years, the development and the Ottawa Housing Commission were dealt a further blow due to fraud within the Commission. See Cassie Doyle.