

Union Station Expansion Program – Third St Viaduct

Columbus Dispatch Articles

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Photo from the Columbus Metropolitan Library – Columbus Dispatch Collection – 1934

At the very top of the photo is the Fourth Street viaduct, which crosses the many railroad tracks on the east side of the station complex. The planners and the public hoped that a Third Street Viaduct would be added. It would relieve traffic congestion on the Fourth Street Viaduct and provide an additional connection to the station.

The Third Street Viaduct would not make the cut. It would take until circa 1960 to be constructed.

RAILROADS FIGHT VIADUCT PROJECT, PROMOTERS SAY

**Against the Proposal Because
They Must Pay Greater Share, Committee Says.**

ARGUMENTS ARE CITED

**Report of Planning Commission Pointed to,
Establishing Need of Change.**

(Columbus Evening Dispatch, October 30, 1927)

The committee of 101 civic leaders promoting the viaduct issue issued a statement Saturday in which it declares opposition to the Third street viaduct and Summit street extension is sponsored by the railroads.

“There is only one source of organized opposition to the Third street viaduct and summit street extension, and that is the railroads entering the Union station. The Baltimore and Ohio railroad has opened fire, and if there are any of the railroads which are against the project, now is the time for them to declare themselves,” the statement says.

“The reason why the railroads are against the viaduct is easy to see. The courts have ruled that they must bear 65 percent of the cost of that part of the viaduct above their tracks. With them, opposition is the result of selfishness. They do not want to pay their share of something which will benefit all Columbus.

PRESENT ARGUMENTS.

“*Here are* the arguments which the railroads will put forth in one manner or another. They will say Columbus does not need the viaduct. As against that we have the findings of our city planning commission, composed of able men with the best interest of our citizens in mind. Their traffic survey makes the building of the Third street viaduct a prime requisite.

“Then the railroads will put out the propaganda that the cost of the issue will not build the viaduct. Again, we have an answer for them from a good Columbus authority, City Engineer Simpson, who has been working on the project of the viaduct for 17 years and says the viaduct can certainly be erected for the price named in the issue.

“Another argument the railroads will make is that the Union station is going to be moved, and so no viaduct will be needed. Suppose the station is moved. The tracks

will still be there, and the centers of business and population still will remain the same. But the station is not going to be moved, at least not soon. The state must abandon the present penitentiary before there can be a new Union station. And that does not seem an early probability.

DENY HARDSHIPS TO RESULT

“The railroads also will try to give the impression that building this viaduct will work a great hardship on the taxpayer. Its cost will be trifling compared with the benefits received, and it will free more than \$1,000,000 to swell Columbus payrolls. Furthermore, appreciation of property along its route in its first few years will yield an increase to the tax duplicate far in excess of its cost.

“Shippers of Columbus and persons entering and leaving the Union station are daily being inconvenienced and delayed so that the loss of time, money and human energy is appalling. The viaduct and the Union station entrance would relieve all this automatically.

“The first shot from the railroads comes through the so-called ‘Tax-Pay-er’ association, which draws its leaders from the Hilltop sewer association, and which is viciously attacking the Third street viaduct. Two large billboards near the Union station carry the sentiments of this organization. There also has been issued a sheet headed ‘Don’t be a Goat.’ This is all railroad propaganda, and there will be more.

“This is a plain case of great corporations against the people. These railroads, for their own selfish ends, do not wish to spend their share of the viaduct cost. So they chose to block a public improvement for all the people – an improvement so badly needed that it is really a public emergency. In this autocratic, un-American stand they are bound to lose, for it is the people who have the vote – not the great corporations,” the statement concludes.

WILL HE PLANT ANOTHER CROSS?



RAILROAD MAKES FINAL APPEAL AGAINST VIADUCT

Senator J. F. Atwood Upholds Committee's Contention of Need for Project.

HITS PERPETUAL KICKERS Many Organizations Listed as Backing the Third Street Improvement.

Last moment railroad propaganda, sent to virtually every Columbus citizen under the name of "The Taxpayers' Association of Columbus," was condemned Saturday night in a statement by the Greater Columbus Committee of 101 Civic Leaders, which is fighting for the Third street viaduct and Summit street extension.

State Senator J. F. Atwood, who has represented the committee through the six-week's battle, which is to close Monday, in the name of the committee said: "The railroads are opposed to the Third street viaduct because they must pay 65 per cent of the cost of the viaduct, if it is built. The courts have ordered this. So the railroads have constructed signs against the viaduct, which they have hung on overhead crossings, which are really partly the property of the public.

"And they have imagined a 'Taxpayers' League of Columbus,' which they have headed with the name of E. B. Eyer, the sort of man who is 'agin everything' and have distributed these from house to house. They have the right to do this, of course. But the thing for people to remember is that they are not being addressed by other taxpayers in this literature, but by the railroads.

SAY PROJECT IS NEEDED.

"The railroads are trying to cram down the throats of Columbus people the defeat of a measure which is so badly needed that it is virtually a public emergency. Our city engineer, our planning commission and this great committee of 101 leading citizens has shown to be false or misleading every statement they have made, so we do not need to deny them one by one. There is simply this to remember. The Third street viaduct and Summit street extension will relieve congestion,

make traffic safer, and make possible a new and adequate entrance to the union station. It will free \$1,200,000 to swell Columbus payrolls. All opposition to it is from the railroads, who are trying to block a worthy city improvement for their own selfish ends."

Senator Atwood furnished a list of the Columbus organizations which have endorsed the viaduct. They are, Columbus Chamber of Commerce, the Manufacturers and Wholesalers association; Columbus Federation of Labor; Columbus Retail Merchants' association; North Side Civic association; New North Side Business and Civic association; South Side Civic association;

Hilltop Business Men's association; Columbus Auto club and Beechwood Civic association.

Approval of Third St. Viaduct Again Sought

APPROVAL is sought for the issuance of bonds by the city of Columbus for the purpose of raising funds to pay the cost of constructing a concrete viaduct as an extension of Third street, from Naghten street to Goodale street, over the tracks of the several railroad companies, which would connect, with passenger and vehicle entrance, with the Union Station.

The amount of bonds is \$1,200,000, which would be a tax levy of approximately one and one-quarter mills per dollar of tax valuation for the payment of interest and retirement of the bonds.

Proponents of the issue urge its passage, claiming:

That the viaduct is needed to relieve congested traffic in the downtown district.

That it would serve as a through thoroughfare expediting traffic to and from the north side for all residents of the city.

That it would serve as an adequate entrance way to the Union Station, avoiding danger and congestion now existing in the "bottle-neck" passageway from High street to the depot.

That existing north bound arteries are not sufficient to adequately take care of traffic into and out of downtown Columbus.

Supporters of the bond issue are legion, headed by city-wide civic and business associations, and a citizens committee of 101 persons.

Those opposed to viaduct bond issue, say:

That existing thoroughfares are adequate to carry traffic into and from the North Side of the city.

That the viaduct is not needed to relieve congestion at the union station.

Opposition to the construction of the viaduct is backed by the railroads over which the viaduct would be constructed. They would be required to pay 65 per cent of the cost of the improvement.

MAGRUDER TURNS OVER COMMAND

PHILADELPHIA, NOV. 5. — (AP) — Rear Admiral Thomas P. Magruder, detached from the command of the

Third Street Viaduct Plans Are Revived

Project Again Discussed As
Part of City Thorough-
fare System.

RELIEVE CONGESTION

Improvement Will Tie In
With Other Major Union
Depot Plans.

Revival of the Third street viaduct idea among numerous downtown business men is anticipated within the next few weeks, it was learned from reliable sources Monday.

Need for a definite linking up of the thoroughfare traffic plan, which has been worked out by the city planning commission, with the viaduct project, has been voiced by many civic leaders within the last few days.

IMPORTANT LINK.

The thoroughfare plan as drawn up by Prof. F. H. Eno of the engineering department of Ohio State university and Service Director Duffy, chairman of the traffic executive committee, calls for the Third street viaduct as an important cog in the system.

According to Service Director Duffy the committee will perfect its plans for the thoroughfare system within the next few days and will submit them to the city council for approval.

"Need for a comprehensive program in the Union station district has brought about the idea that now is the opportune time for discussion of the Third street viaduct," declared H. R. Edwards, city planning commission engineer, Monday.

With the recent action of the Union station board of directors to construct a new train shed at an estimated cost of \$750,000, with the definite provision in the contract that it be completed by Nov. 1, various downtown business interests are of the opinion that the time is ripe to bring the Third street viaduct project, which has been hanging fire for more than six years, to the front once more.

RELIEVE CONGESTION.

"The contemplated viaduct project is fast becoming a necessity as Columbus attempts to solve its traffic problems. A connecting link between Third street and Summit street would be a great relief to traffic congestion," according to one prominent business man.

"The Third street viaduct would be a very important link in our new thoroughfare system," declared Professor Eno Monday.

City engineers declared that the viaduct had been included in all blueprints which have been made to date of the anticipated system.

In view of the fact that a Union station improvement program has been voted calling for a train shed which will be constructed at a cost of not less than three-quarters of a million dollars, and because of talk regarding a fruit and vegetable terminal to be built in the near future, as well as discussion of the Chesapeake & Ohio's rumored plans for a great freight terminal, civic leaders of Columbus believe the time is at hand for a definite settlement of the Third street viaduct project.

RAIL OFFICIALS HERE.

It was further intimated that many of the outstanding business and professional men of the city had become interested in the viaduct project. This fact alone is expected to create sentiment for the linking up of the entire viaduct scheme with the thoroughfare plan and the terminal, freight house, Union Station train shed construction program.

However, it was learned, Monday, that solicitors of the Big Four and Pennsylvania railroads, were in touch with fruit dealers in Town street last week, regarding certain developments which vitally concern the proposed fruit and vegetable terminal.

For some time it has been known that the Hocking Valley, now the Chesapeake & Ohio, has been contemplating the construction of a freight terminal. Plans are now said to be going forward rapidly on this anticipated project.

With these various construction programs in mind, and with the thoroughfare plan practically ready for consideration by the city council, influential business and professional men are anxious to get the Third street viaduct problem cleared up while the various construction projects are hanging fire.