

Minutes of the Second Meeting of Sub-Committee No. 9 (House Planning and Design) held in the Board Room, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, on Wednesday, 26th November, 1947 at 9.30 a.m.

Present:

- Mr. P.H. Connell (Acting Chairman) - National Building Research Institute.
- Mr. J.E. Jennings - National Building Research Institute.
- Mr. G. Candiotes - Institute of S.A. Architects.
- Mr. G.R. Whale
- Mr. G.I. Nel - Department of Native Affairs.
- Mr. van Beijma - National Housing and Planning Commission.
- Mr. C.L. Scott
- Mrs. M.G. Sherlock - National Council for Women.
- Mrs. E.C. van der Lingen - Federale Vroueraad.

In Attendance:

- Miss S. de Beer - National Building Research Institute.

Apologies:

- Mr. D.M. Cowin.
- Dr. Gordon Laing.
- Dr. Nelson.

At the request of Mr. Jennings, Mr. Connell took the chair, and welcomed Mr. G. Candiotes who had been nominated by the Institute of S.A. Architects as their second representative on this Sub-Committee and Mr. C.L. Scott who had been appointed Honorary Consultant on solid fuel appliances to the Research Committee on Minimum Standards of Accommodation.

1. Confirmation of Minutes.

For the benefit of those members who had not been present at the first meeting of the Sub-Committee, the Acting Chairman reviewed the work of the Research Committee as a whole, referring to the chart attached to the Minutes, and giving particular emphasis to this sub-committee's organisation and work. He pointed out that the Research Committee was not concerned with housing for the wealthy, but for the range of housing required for middle class workers where economies began to be necessary, down to native housing where usually only the bare essentials were possible, and it was absolutely necessary to make the very best use of the little space and equipment provided.

Many variable factors would have to be taken into consideration, such as racial, climatic and regional differences.

The Minutes were then confirmed and signed.

2. Matters arising out of Minutes.

Mrs. Sherlock asked whether Miss Martin and Miss Pienaar

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had been contacted.

The Chairman said that this had been done. A letter had been received from Mrs. Harold Jones of Cape Town, the National Council for Women's representative to the Main Committee, suggesting that the Association of Women Property Manageresses be invited to send a representative, and this proposal was on the agenda for the next Main Committee meeting.

3. Progress Report.

(Ref. Minutes of First Meeting. P. 3., III)

Regarding study-group III(a) Mr. van Beijma told the meeting that he had not been able to collect much information in time for this meeting. There was a vast amount of information available, however, at the National Housing and Planning Commission, and next month he would have more time to work through this. Mr. Connell also had not been able to bring any information to this meeting although he had commenced an analysis of all the problems to be tackled.

It was agreed that Mr. van Beijma and Mr. Connell should meet in December and work in co-operation on this matter.

Regarding III(b) Installations, Mr. Nel pointed out that very flexible minima would have to be adopted regarding the installations provided. These were dependent on existing conditions, such as water reticulation for example. In locations, where the ultimate aim might be to provide one tap over the sink in each house, his Department was often unable to do more than provide one tap to serve a number of houses in common. Often all that was laid down in Municipal regulations was that water "must be taken to the location boundary".

Mr. Nel went on to say that in his opinion the sub-committee should not adopt absolute minima as their ultimate aim, but should, while relating their investigation to something immediate and possible, at the same time bear in mind ideal or desirable standards as a long term policy. Mr. van Beijma felt, however, that the Committee should go to rock bottom in fixing its minima. At the National Housing and Planning Commission it was found that local authorities' standards were always higher than those of the commission.

Mr. Scott suggested that the best approach to the problem would be to first find out what undesirable practices were in force at present and why these were undesirable. The Committee could then use this information as a foundation on which to base recommended standards.

Mr. van Beijma said that the National Housing and Planning Commission, whilst drawing up its Minimum Standards now in force, had sent a circular to every Municipality in South Africa, and he suggested that this might be done regarding III(b) Installations. Information for III(a) was already in hand at the National Housing and Planning Commission.

Mr. Jennings said that if the information in Mr. Connell's Sub-Economic Housing Report were combined with the information already in hand at the National Housing and Planning Commission, he felt that the committee would have sufficient data to work on.

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With regard to the sub-division of the work as set out in the Minutes, Mr. Jennings stated that in his opinion the emphasis should be on House Planning and Design. Furniture and living studies should be made in those buildings, information on which we already possess.

Mrs. Sherlock told the Committee that she had circularised all the different branches of the National Council for Women with regard to III(c) Furniture and Fittings. She read a summary of the replies received, which were a cross section of housewives' opinions on this subject (Copy attached). Subsequent discussion on furniture took place, and Mr. Scott put forward the name of Mr. Christian Barman, late Assistant Director of the Ministry of Works, Great Britain, as a useful contact on this subject, particularly regarding standard utility furniture in England.

4. Work Programme.

Agreed:

1. That III(a) Numbers, sizes, function and relationship of rooms, be treated as the most important aspect of the study, and that the members of the Sub-Committee responsible for this section, meet early in January.
2. That (a) and (d) Dwelling Types, be treated concurrently or at least, that members of the Sub-Committee work from (a) to (d).
3. That the study groups for (b) Installation and (c) Furniture and Fittings should also meet soon and that Mr. Whale's name be immediately added to (b).
4. That Mrs. van der Lingen's name be added to (c).
5. That for groups (b) and (c) all members of the sub-Committee be asked to submit questions to the Organising Secretary (to reach him not later than December 3rd) which he would then pass on to the study groups concerned.
6. That (e) Relationship of housing to Estate Planning, be left over for the time being.
7. That the title "Installations" in (b) be changed to "Services".
8. That copies of Mr. Connell's Sub-Economic Housing Report, and of the National Housing and Planning Commission's Minimum Standards be circulated to all Committee members as soon as available.
9. That in the main, the work which the Sub-Committee undertakes should be concerned with planning and design; whatever goes into the houses should, however, come under consideration as the study progresses.

5. General.

Mr. van Beijma proposed that Mr. Linington of Cape Town be co-opted to serve as a Corresponding member, in view of his

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experience with coloured housing. Mr. Jennings likewise proposed that Mr. Bennett of the Natal Housing Board be asked to serve as a Corresponding member from Natal, and members felt that there should also be Corresponding members from the Orange Free State and the Eastern Province. It was agreed that Mr. Linington and Mr. Bennett be co-opted, and that the Organising Secretary write to the City Engineer, Port Elizabeth, and to the Provincial Institute of Architects to ask for a nomination from the Orange Free State.

With reference to a leader which appeared in the Pretoria News shortly after the last meeting of this Sub-Committee, presenting a somewhat distorted view of the work of the Research Committee on Minimum Standards of Accommodation, it was agreed that in future, approaches to the Press should always be done officially through the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research.

The date for the next meeting was fixed at Thursday, January 8th, at 2 p.m.

The meeting ended at 12 midday.

Confirmed,

C H A I R M A N.

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