

HENRY GEORGE INSTITUTE

5 East 44th Street
New York, N.Y. 10017

Dec. 19, 1980

Dear Ed:

Glad to have your letter of Dec. 1 and enclosures. I've sent a copy of your Graham Hart comments to Mr. Hart, and we'll also refer to it in our next Issue.

There does indeed seem to be progress in Philadelphia, and you do indeed seem to be part of it. I heard from Phil Finkelstein about his meeting with city officials there who are ready to listen.

Richard Pensack had an interview with Jude Wanniski in his paper, the Newark Star-Ledger. If interested I'm sure Richard can send you a copy.

Good to hear that Equal Rights is finally in process, and I'll look forward to seeing it.

Hope to see you one of these days.

Sincerely,

Robert Clancy

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EDWARD J DODSON

NO 423, 2300 WALNUT STREET
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103

December 1, 1980

Robert Clancy, Chairman
Council of Georgist Organizations
5 East 44th Street
New York, NY 10017

Dear Bob:

Late last week I was surprised and rather delighted to receive a short note from Frank Nelson in Delaware, advising that the manuscripts for an issue of EQUAL RIGHTS have been delivered to a printer here in Pennsylvania. Hopefully, an issue will shortly be forthcoming.

As I mentioned during our telephone conversation, I feel confident that changes are on the horizon here in Philadelphia. You may already have heard from George Collins on the public discussion held at the school on Friday, November 21st. From the comments of Al Letson, who is Director of the Bureau of Revision of Taxes, and was the guest speaker, he is in total support of site valuation as a basis for the property tax. He also indicated that the subject is being seriously discussed in City Council.

On a related topic, last Monday evening I attended the annual Philadelphia Mortgage Bankers Association dinner at one of the city's bastions of conservatism -- the Union League. The guest speaker was Tom Messara, the city's housing authority director. During the dinner I had a long and positive discussion on housing programs and "solutions" with a former FNMA official named Harvey Young, who now works for the Philadelphia Office of Housing and Community Development. He is very receptive to a differential tax rate on land versus improvements; however, I do not yet know to what extent he would be willing to use his position to influence tax policy in the city.

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Tom Messara discussed the city's plans for residential and commercial revitalization, an integral part of which is what is being called "Gallery II" -- a megastructure of commercial and retail shops which has caused a great deal of political discussion over the vast expenditure of funds. At the end of his presentation, Messara fielded a few questions and I was able to ask him a pointed one about Philadelphia's economic outlook. I asked him how he could realistically expect lenders to provide funds for housing when the shift from industrial to service employment opportunities over the last 15-20 years has left so many individuals without the proper skills to fill the available jobs and, therefore, qualify for mortgage money under standard income and credit guidelines. Needless to say, he skirted the question and answered indirectly by saying that projects like Gallery II would open up new opportunities. Unfortunately, I did not have an opportunity to talk to him further on a one-to-one basis.

I was hoping to get some feedback on my lecture at Rutgers; nothing yet, but I haven't had a chance to talk to Meg Worthington to see whether her friend (who teaches the urban studies class at which we spoke) has gotten any further interest from the students. I must say that the lecture was an extremely rewarding experience for me; I at least managed to make a fairly clear presentation (if not brief) during which no one "seemed" to have fallen asleep.

On the recent questionnaire and the issue of how to give the Georgist movement the kind of organization which will promote growth and maximize our impact, I have a number of ideas -- some of which might be useful in the short term, others more in line with what Graham Hart would like to see. Rather than continue here, I have enclosed a separate outline and welcome your comments or questions.

By the way Bob, don't forget that I have a toll free number at work if there's ever anything you'd like to discuss which shouldn't wait for the mails.

Best personal regards,

Sincerely,



Ed Dodson

cc: George Collins
Richard Biddle