

Lucas Gelfond

Requirements for all students:

A 250–300 word summary:

- Identifying your topic or building;
- Explaining why you have selected your topic or building;
- Describing the research question you hope to answer or things you hope to discover about your topic or building.

I am going to be building a model of Raymond Hood's plan for a new city center for Providence.

I picked Hood's project because I love the idea of modeling something that is quintessentially *Brown*. Obviously Hood went to Brown and lived in Providence during his time there, but also was born in Pawtucket and is clearly familiar with the area. I think Brown is also more shaped by Providence than we often acknowledge and had Hood's plan been taken out, the fabric of Providence would be quite different—the current Rhode Island statehouse is one of the most prominent bits of our skyline and the city would likely function quite differently if we followed Hood's plan. A lot of the sources I found on ArtStor also appear to be in the History of Art and Architecture / Urban Studies catalogs—I would love to see if I could get access to our archives and build based on the more detailed actual plans. In addition, when I met with Professor Neumann during his office hours he absolutely convinced me toward doing a Hood for the exhibition, for obvious reasons.

I'd hope in my modelmaking to learn more tangibly what Providence would feel like if the project was actually built more so than just what is on the page. While I'll only have about a page to do so, I'd also hope in some research to come up with some of the motivations behind it—how did Brown, his childhood in Rhode Island, and his view from Providence influence how he thought the city center should look? What values are imbued in his design and how would Hood hope to see Providence change (or stay the same!) with the new building in its landscape?

I'll be designing the model in a 3D modeling program that I'm really comfortable with, OpenSCAD, but am planning to 3D print it out. As such, I'll be using the 3D printers in the Brown Design Workshop (will be using it!) and will be 3D printing it in plastic.

Professor Neumann and I are trying to figure out whether the Courthouse was also part of the Civic Center but he said this was a fine start in terms of images!

Additional requirements for students building models:

- In your 250–300 word summary, please indicate:
 - whether you are building a physical or digital model,
 - what materials (if building a physical model) or computer program (if creating a digital model) you intend to use,
 - whether or not you will be using the Brown Design Workshop;
- 3–4 images relating to your project; (at least) 2 must be published architectural drawings (floor plan, elevation, section, etc.) that will help you construct your model. Each image must have a caption. Please provide full citations for your sources.

Providence, R. I.
March 19, 1916

Special Features

The Providence Sunday Journal

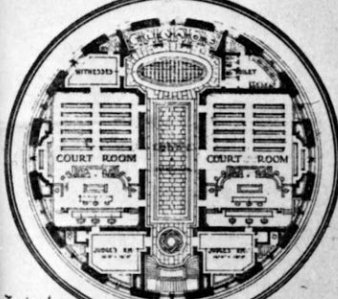
Fifth Section

A STRIKING PLAN FOR DIGNIFYING CIVIC CENTRE

Design Copyright,
1916, by
Raymond M. Hood.



The Main Entrance To The Court House.



Typical
Floor Plan of
the Tower

**Former Rhode Islander Suggests
Imposing State and Municipal
Group. With Tower, to Occupy
Entire Square South of Exchange
Place**

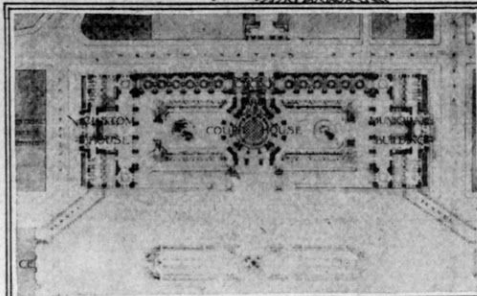
STARTLING, ambitious and comprehensive are the plans that have been drawn by Raymond M. Hood, a New York architect, as a suggestion for a representative Exchange place, with the ultimate object of making the great plaza one of the most beautiful squares in America.

For a number of years those beautiful lawns, which have been the pride of the city, have been suffering from the neglect of the city fathers. The plan for a new Exchange place, with the ultimate object of making the great plaza one of the most beautiful squares in America.

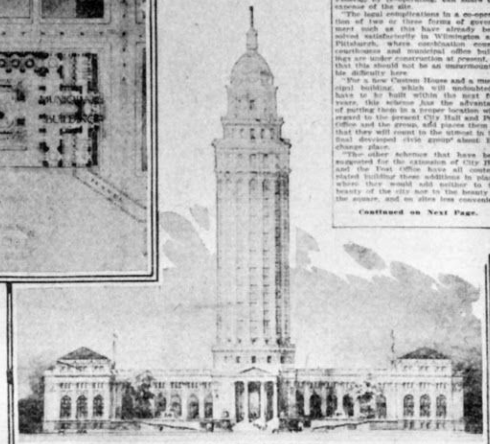
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View of the
Monumental Group
from the North



Plan Showing Relation of Suggested
Buildings to the City Hall and Post Office



Elevation of Court House, Federal and Municipal Buildings.



Raymond M. Hood.

with the area already owned by the city, would provide sites for public buildings in the future, including the new exchange, should it be deemed inadvisable to locate it on Exchange place.

In drawing the plan Mr. Hood has placed the courthouse with back from the street and the continuous would be some distance along the travelled way, thereby eliminating the unsightliness of traffic houses. The theory has been proved by large commercial buildings, in which, however, the upper floors are never occupied except the first floor, which has been located open streets with a view to the permanent plan that is to change place.

These drawings are to show primarily the possibility of locating the new exchange on Exchange place opposite the railroad station. The exchange covers the entire plot of property bounded by Westminster street, Exchange place, Exchange street and Court House street. It is recommended that the exchange be a public building on this site, as the building, as it stands at present, with the City Hall at one end, the Post Office on another and the station with its parking in front on the third side, makes a most desirable site for a public building. A row of commercial buildings of varied heights and styles of architecture on the site would certainly be an unsatisfactory architectural result. The exchange, which would be a public building, would be one of the most beautiful squares in America.

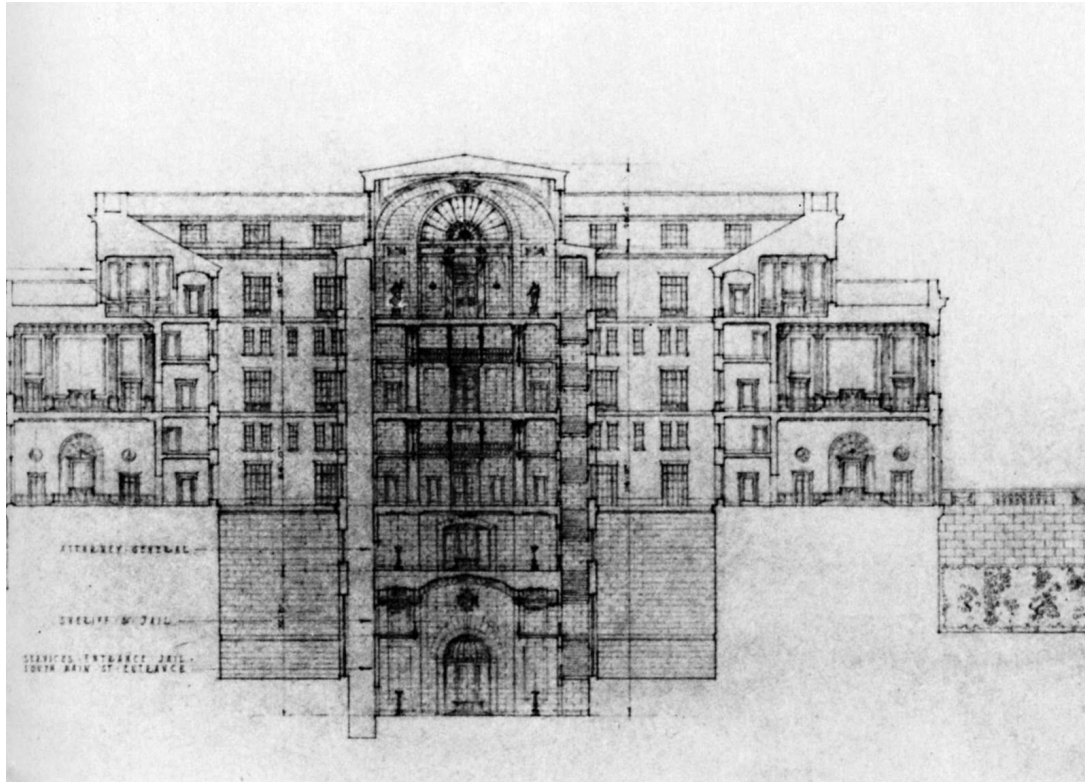
The exchange suggests itself for this site in that it is the only large public building still remaining to be built in Providence, and the site is much more important for any similar building. Furthermore, if a public building is to be built on this site, the property value now is so low as it will ever be, as there are no other buildings on it at present.

The whole group of buildings, in which the exchange is the central building, will carry to land value, so for the exchange the exchange is the only building that is for the group as shown, consisting of the Court House, the courthouse and the municipal building. In this way the three governments, the city, State and Federal, by co-operating, can share the expense of the site.

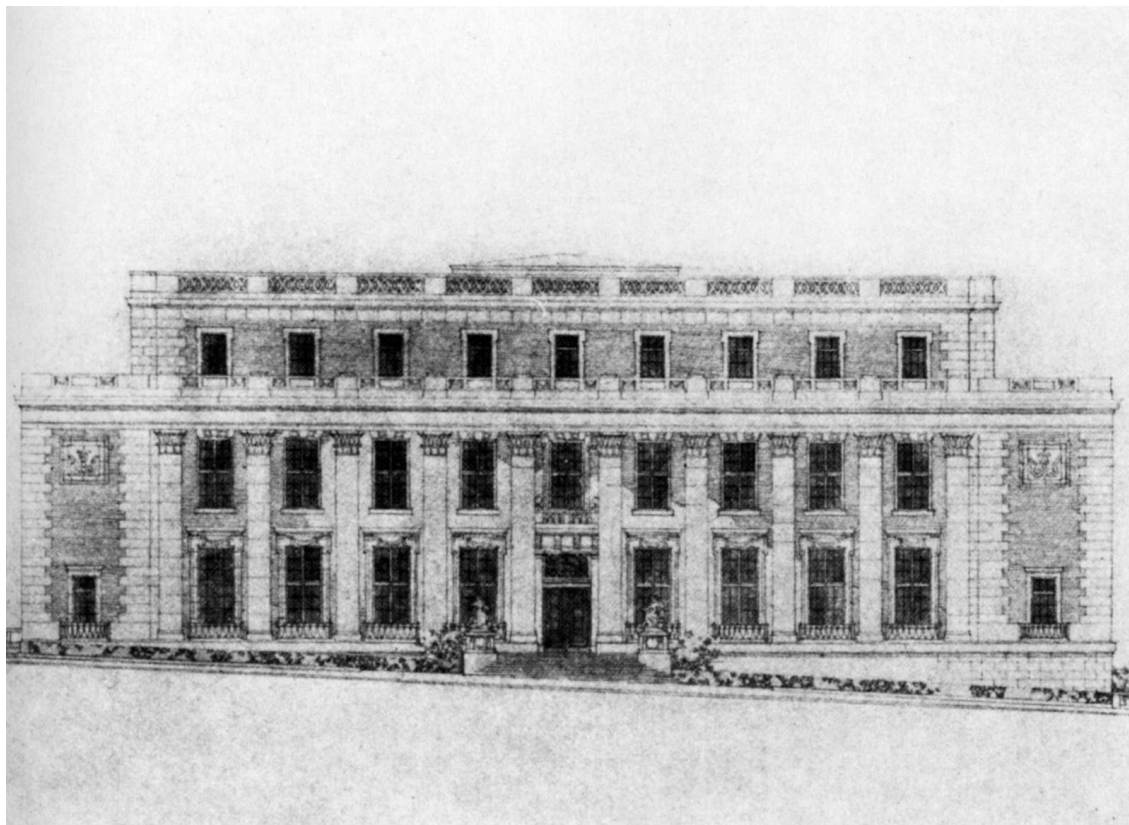
The local complications in a co-operation of land to form a group of government such as this have already been solved satisfactorily in Washington and Philadelphia, where the exchange, the courthouse and municipal office building have been built on a single lot, and that this should be an encouragement, as the exchange is the only building that is for the group as shown, consisting of the Court House, the courthouse and the municipal building. In this way the three governments, the city, State and Federal, by co-operating, can share the expense of the site.

The other scheme that has been suggested for the extension of City Hall and the Post Office, has all the advantages of putting them in a proper location with regard to the present City Hall and Post Office, and the group, and place them so that they would be in the heart of the city, and the exchange is the only building that is for the group as shown, consisting of the Court House, the courthouse and the municipal building. In this way the three governments, the city, State and Federal, by co-operating, can share the expense of the site.

A feature in the Providence Sunday Journal outlining Hood's plan for a Providence Civic Center.



One of Hood's diagrams for a Courthouse.



Another of Hood's drawings for a Courthouse.



One of Hood's floor plans for the Courthouse.

References

- “Civic Center, Project.” *The Providence Sunday Journal*, March 19, 1916.
- Raymond Hood, Godley and Foulhoux. “Providence County Courthouse, Project.” In *Raymond Hood*, edited by Robert A. M. Stern and Thomas P. Catalano, 41, Fig. No.2. New York: Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, 1982.
<https://brown.lunaimaging.com/luna/servlet/detail/Brwn~1~1~335006~153956:Providence-County-Courthouse,-proje?qvq=q:raymond%20hood%20providence&mi=1&trs=6#>.
- . “Providence County Courthouse, Project.” In *Raymond Hood*, edited by Robert A. M. Stern and Thomas P. Catalano, 41, Fig. No.1. New York: Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, 1982.
<https://brown.lunaimaging.com/luna/servlet/detail/Brwn~1~1~335005~153955:Providence-County-Courthouse,-proje?qvq=q:providence%20county%20courthouse%20raymond%20hood&mi=0&trs=4>.
- . “Providence County Courthouse, Project.” In *Raymond Hood*, edited by Robert A. M. Stern and Thomas P. Catalano, 41, Fig. No.3. New York: Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, 1982.
<https://brown.lunaimaging.com/luna/servlet/detail/Brwn~1~1~335005~153955:Providence-County-Courthouse,-proje?qvq=q:providence%20county%20courthouse%20raymond%20hood&mi=0&trs=4>.