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New-town Development Has Chaska In Limelight



"JONATHAN" IS UNDERWAY! Official ground breaking ceremonies for a research and industrial area in the newly announced Jonathan Development were held yesterday. Senator Henry McKnight, left, Chaska Mayor Frank Hensel and Mrs. Henry T. (Grace) McKnight are pictured putting their "feet together". Observing proceedings from a more modern earth moving facility are Steve Krogness, executive vice president of Jonathan, Ben Cunningham, chief architect and "new town" planner, Julius Smith, Chaska city attorney, Clyde Byberg, project coordinator, Donald Heiser, project supervisor for general contractor Kraus-Anderson and William Dahlke, president of the Chaska City Council (in driver's seat).

Richmond, Virginia Firm Provided The Answer

Why Local Area As Site For Jonathan?

There were many questions asked at Tuesday morning "press preview" of Jonathan — a "new town" plan announced by Henry T. McKnight who seems intent on developing what his self-admired explorer Jonathan Carver is credited with finding.

The first question which has been circulating for years "what do they want with all that land" now seems evident.

However, the "million dollar" question (the idea today is to think big and the \$64 question is a thing of the past) is "why this area?"

To find the answer one has to go back a couple of years since late in 1965 McKnight and backers hired the Richmond, Virginia firm of J. Robert Carlton and Associates to survey the prospective site.

Why an "out-of-town" firm? Well, the answer to this one is easy — to keep the project confidential.

Ben Cunningham, a lanky architect-planner, originally from Georgia, was placed in charge of the project. To say that Cunningham liked what he saw is to put things mildly since Cunningham left the Virginia firm and is now preliminary planner and chief architect for the entire project on a consultant basis.

About thirteen months ago, in June, 1966, it was agreed that the Carver County site had all the requirements necessary for a "new city" — good land location, land use potential, realistic pricing, financing and "solvable" municipal-political problems.

A big factor was "annexations" that put all the land in one municipality — offering municipal sewer and water service. Thus, one sees what Chaska had to offer and why Jonathan will be in the City of Chaska.

There undoubtedly will be more questions but there is no question that "foresight" has prompted some of the developments that have been prompting questions.

First Phase Of Plans Made Public Tuesday

Self-Contained Community Eyes Ultimate Population Of 50,000

Whispers and rumors of past months sounded loud and clear Tuesday morning when a bold plan for a "new town" development in the City of Chaska was announced by Henry T. McKnight, real estate financier, and president of the newly formed Jonathan Development Corporation.

Chaska's "well guarded secret" became the lead story in Twin City newspapers, on television screens and over radio as "news" of Jonathan — a self-contained development with its own industrial, commercial, service and recreational facilities was announced at a special press party at Carver's Green — McKnight's town-house project at Hazeltine.

An ultimate population of 50,000 in single-family homes, town houses and apartments of various sizes are planned for Jonathan — named after English explorer Jonathan Carver, much admired by McKnight.

Jonathan is believed to be the largest planned community development in Minnesota real estate history.

The complete "new town" is to be constructed on a site which straddles state highway 41 south of state highway 5 — adjacent to Hazeltine National Golf Course.

The property is all in the city limits of Chaska — and the development will be served by Chaska's municipal sewer and water system.

Construction of the first phase of the development already approved by the Chaska City Council and Chaska Planning Commission, is now underway and will be a 150-acre center for research and industry.

Focal point of the development will be "Town Center". It will be a "megastructure" or "non-building" housing shops, restaurants, theaters, apartments and transportation terminal.

Surrounding the "Town Center" will be the residential areas — called "villages".

Village One, a residential community designed to accommodate 7,000 people, is to be started next spring with "village Two" to begin in 1977.

In 20 years, five separate villages will have emerged to form a complete new town — according to projections by McKnight.

The major feature of Jonathan is to be the "megastructure" — designed by principal planner and chief architect Benjamin Cunningham.

A veritable "city within a building", this structure will contain residences, retail facilities, commercial and industrial operations, educational facilities entertainment and recreation, restaurants, hotel, transportation terminals and parking.

Land planning for the development is designed to preserve 20% of the total area in greenspace and lakes — several to be man-made.

Jonathan Development Corporation, of which McKnight is president and Stephen M. Krogness is manager, is the owner and developer. Project coordinator is Clyde N. Ryberg. Directors include J. F. Deckenbach, Wheelock Whitney and Theodore Gray of Minneapolis, and Lewis Krohn of Wertheim and Company, New York.

Carver County Fair