

RESTON

Bob looked around for another real estate investment and wound up buying 6,750 acres in Virginia. The cost of taking title was \$800,000, subject to a \$12,000,000 mortgage that was interest free for ten years. That property was far too big for a shopping center and it didn't seem logical to use it for another Levittown with single family homes.

He had been thinking about how it might be possible to put a lot of people together in such a way that they could be employed in the same place where they lived. That was one of the main goals of Reston as it developed - to make it possible for people to avoid commuting and, instead, work in their own community. Although many of his contemporaries thought it a far-fetched idea, Bob pursued it, demonstrating again his independence of mind.

He began by researching the planners who were active in large scale community planning in the U.S. Out of that research came the choice of the Bartholomew group based in St. Louis. They were one of the largest in the field at that time, with some 200 planners on their staff and an excellent reputation. Bob started work with the team assigned to him but soon found incompatibilities between his approach and theirs and decided to find another group.

He finally chose the firm of Whittlesey and Conklin because they had more new town experience than any other firm in the country. When they were known as Mayor and Whittlesley they had been responsible for the new town of Radburn in New Jersey and had also done the town of Kitemat in Canada. In view of his earlier experience with the Bartholomew group Bob decided to test things out by working with the principals of Whittlesley and Conklin on another project to see if he could work as well with them as he hoped.

Bob assigned them the recreation building project at a beach club out in West Hampton and found that they not only did a great job, but that he and the group also got along very well. On that basis Bob brought them in to the Reston project and eased Bartholomew out. And thus began the very complicated and fascinating Reston project.

The first thing that had to be done was to develop a zoning ordinance because there was none in the county that would make the Reston town concept possible. To that end, Bob engaged a team of law firms, each selected for its specific skills and the experience needed in dealing with the myriad problems of the project. Among the firms were: Boutine, Hayes, and Sklar; Alvin Schulman; Tannie Whitehorn and Hank Ingraham from McInanahan, Merritt, and Ingraham. To deal with

1 local problems there were three different law firms in  
2 Virginia; one, in particular was Litton Gibson, politically  
3 knowledgeable, who helped considerably in dealing with the  
4 county supervisors.

5  
6 Also on the Virginia legal team was Armistead Booth, a Rhodes  
7 Scholar and an expert on Virginia laws and customs. Ed  
8 Pritchard, who Bob enjoyed as a very good tennis player, was  
9 also an excellent lawyer who focussed on contracts and  
10 titles. Subsequently, Amy (?) Booth and Ed Pritchard merged  
11 and their combined firm now represents Reston.

12  
13 There were innumerable legalisms involved in getting the  
14 zoning needed for Reston. The legal team went far afield to  
15 find everything relevant and available. There were things to  
16 be looked at in places like St. Louis, Philadelphia, Hawaii,  
17 and even in Europe. Out of this research finally came  
18 concepts for a zoning ordinance to be called: a residential  
19 planned community.

20  
21 In the meantime, the town planners, Conklin and Rosat, were  
22 developing the concept for seven villages and the rest of the  
23 features that went into the Reston master plan. One  
24 fortuitous but unexpected source of help came from Fairfax  
25 County itself. At that time Fairfax County had a paid  
26 planning staff of twenty-two professionals, so Bob's team  
27 was dealing with people who were familiar with virtually  
28 everything Bob and his staff were talking about.

29  
30 By working fast and furiously, Bob and his team, within  
31 eleven months from the time he took title to the property,  
32 had approval of the master plan subject to the zoning  
33 ordinance on which the board of supervisors had not yet  
34 passed. It was an incredible accomplishment. Today, a piece  
35 of property can't be divided in two in much less than eleven  
36 months.

37  
38 Interestingly enough, six of the seven members of the local  
39 board of supervisors were later indicted for selling zoning  
40 variances, and five of them served jail sentences. Bob was  
41 offered the opportunity to contribute to their schemes and  
42 was even solicited to lend some of them money, but prudently  
43 declined to be involved. Venality reared its head again!

44  
45 The critical approvals required before construction could  
46 begin had to come from the board of supervisors. In July of  
47 1961, Bob knew that he had three supervisors on his side,  
48 including the chairman, but there were four votes he was very  
49 dubious about.

50  
51 At that point, Bob's friend, Fritz Gutheim of the Washington  
52 Center for Metropolitan Studies, helped launch a campaign



1 which resulted in the publication of seven articles and one  
2 editorial lauding Reston in the Washington Post in the week  
3 preceding the "moment of truth" with the board of  
4 supervisors. The Washington Star, now extinct, also had six  
5 favorable articles and one editorial, and the local Virginia  
6 press had banner headlines that looked as if war had been  
7 declared.

8  
9 On the appointed day, the team sat waiting anxiously for the  
10 board's decision. It was a hot July night. And the board  
11 voted unanimously in favor of the zoning ordinance, and then,  
12 thirty seconds later, voted approval of the master plan! So  
13 much for the power of the press! It was clear that the board  
14 found this too hot an issue to tangle with. Although the  
15 lawyers and engineers were an indispensable part of the team,  
16 Fritz Gutheim really was also instrumental in getting the  
17 zoning approval.

18  
19 At this point, it is important to review the critical  
20 financial steps the developer of any real estate project must  
21 go through and the enormous amounts of money that must be  
22 raised. In stage one the developer must obtain the funds  
23 needed to purchase land. Then money must be provided for the  
24 work of the architects and engineers who design the structure  
25 of the facility and prepare the building plans, whether it be  
26 a shopping mall, an office building, a block of apartments,  
27 or, in the case of Reston, a complete town. The next hurdle  
28 is getting the plans approved by the community or controlling  
29 governing agency, e.g. a county board of governors.

30  
31 Concurrently, a market research and publicity effort is  
32 needed to establish the soundness of the enterprise for the  
33 benefit of investors and the public. Given the required  
34 governmental approvals, the next major hurdle is to obtain  
35 the funds needed to begin actual building of the project.

36  
37 While Bob and his company had bought the land, funded the  
38 critical planning effort, and obtained the necessary official  
39 approvals, there still remained the overwhelming task of  
40 obtaining the building funds needed for the first phase of  
41 the construction - the building of the first of seven planned  
42 villages.

43  
44 Because many features of the town plan were unorthodox and  
45 had never been done before, e.g., putting town houses and a  
46 high rise apartment building in a bucolic setting 20 miles  
47 from Washington, it was not a simple matter to find eager  
48 investors. However, after fifty-four refusals, Bob found a  
49 banker who would put up the construction money. The  
50 seemingly endless series of refusals he experienced had  
51 almost made him begin to doubt the soundness of his plans.

1 To ensure that Reston would not have a single, monolithic  
2 character, Bob decided to have three different varieties of  
3 buildings in the northern part of Reston. To this end, he  
4 hired three architectural groups, Conklin and Rosat, Charles  
5 Goodman, and Clothiel Smith. Bob had worked with Conklin and  
6 Rosat earlier in the project, and he admired the work done  
7 in the Washington area by Charles Goodman and Clothiel Smith.  
8 Curiously enough, he found that the houses designed by the  
9 female architect, Smith, were disappointing to some of the  
10 owners because of the inadequate kitchens! Was it because  
11 Clothiel Smith had never spent much time in the kitchen? Bob  
12 eschews any chauvinist conclusions.

13  
14 Although it was an expensive decision, they decided to start  
15 a traditional subdivision in the south of Reston  
16 simultaneously with the start in the north. This was a hedge  
17 against the possibility that if the more radical pattern in  
18 the northern part, which included Lake Ann Village and  
19 Village Center, were not successful, they would have a  
20 traditional subdivision going in the south in the Hunters  
21 Woods Section. That's where they were selling single family  
22 units. However, to ensure the variety of housing needed to  
23 satisfy his basic objectives for Reston, single family units  
24 were also available in Lake Ann, the first village.

25  
26 Making it possible for residents to "stay put" through the  
27 changes in status and activities they experienced as they  
28 progressed through their life cycles was exactly the  
29 objective of the Reston plan. Because of the great variety  
30 of housing units, including small apartments, town houses,  
31 detached family dwellings which were part of Reston, that is  
32 exactly what happened. In Reston the residents didn't have  
33 to pick up and go to a new neighborhood and find new  
34 neighbors, new storekeepers, recreational facilities, etc.  
35 They could stay put in familiar and friendly surroundings  
36 throughout their lives even with changes in jobs and personal  
37 life-styles. This was one of the most important objectives  
38 of the Lake Ann community design.

39  
40 Many questions were raised about Bob's decision to build a  
41 high-rise at the Lake Ann Center. The reason it was done,  
42 Bob says, is illustrated by a quotation from Gertrude Stein  
43 that he often used. She said about a suburb that she knew:  
44 "There is no there there." Bob had seen pictures of  
45 Tapiola, in Finland, where the focal point of the development  
46 was a high-rise office building. While he decided that it  
47 was too risky to build a high-rise office building out in the  
48 middle of the Virginia countryside because it might never be  
49 rented, he decided that a high-rise apartment building would  
50 create Gertrude Stein's "there, there", because, apartments,  
51 if rented cheaply enough, he felt, would rent.



1 Another reason for his decision was based on his thinking  
2 about the employment area - the commercial part of Reston.  
3 The high-rise apartment building gave people who were  
4 involved in local industry the feeling that this was not  
5 going to be just another subdivision, but a new town.

6  
7 Bob had confirmation that the hi-rise had the desired effect  
8 when, after a lecture he gave at the University of  
9 Pennsylvania, a man came up to him and said: "You know, your  
10 hypothesis that the hi-rise might attract industry is very  
11 well borne out because I happen to have been on the  
12 committee that made the decision to bring Singer (a major  
13 high-tech design and manufacturing company) to Reston. We  
14 had the thing narrowed down to three locations, and it was  
15 the hi-rise that attracted us. We said, 'This is really  
16 going to be the place for us.' And that's why we went with  
17 Reston specifically." It turned out that Singer opened up  
18 the day before the first residents moved into Reston so that,  
19 as hoped, employment was in residence there as well as  
20 people.

21  
22 In addition to housing, Reston includes recreational  
23 facilities such as a golf course, tennis courts, and  
24 swimming pools. There is also a community center in Lake Ann  
25 designed to do almost anything conceivable indoors. From the  
26 uses to which this facility was put it became clear that  
27 activities as varied as live theatre, movies, lectures, dance  
28 classes, painting classes, gymnastics and many other things  
29 were part of the fabric of Reston life. And that was the  
30 concept, that the spaces and facilities provided would enable  
31 the residents to decide for themselves what they wanted to  
32 do. Experience would determine whether more specialized  
33 facilities were needed.

34  
35 Another design concept, similar to Radburn, New Jersey, and  
36 some of the new towns in England, was that people in Reston  
37 could walk wherever they needed to go rather than leap into a  
38 car. In the Reston design, the roadways for cars were  
39 completely separated from the extensive walkways.  
40 Unfortunately, one sad aspect of the walkways, most of which  
41 go through carefully preserved woods, is that lately there  
42 has been some crime; so the residents have started putting  
43 the pathways along the roads in the hope that car headlights  
44 will offer some protection. In the local Reston newspaper  
45 are recent articles suggesting that the County put a regular  
46 police patrol on the walkways.

47  
48 Going back to the complex funding of this kind of  
49 development, enormous amounts of money are needed. Most of  
50 this has to be provided by lending institutions, but more  
51 equity funding is also needed to reduce the pressure of  
52 regular debt payments. Bob and his group did not have it.

1 Only \$1,200,000 was left after buying the land and that was  
2 being spent on planners, lawyers, architects, and then on  
3 roads, sewers and other necessities.  
4

5 Chase Manhattan Bank and the United Virginia Bank had made  
6 possible much of the construction but the project very much  
7 needed an active financial partner. Almost at the beginning  
8 of the project Bob began looking for equity financing and  
9 contacted several possible sources.  
10

11 In 1964, after three tries, an agreement was finally reached  
12 with the Gulf Corporation, but the deal was such that the  
13 actual cash received was gone virtually the day after the  
14 project got it. Gulf had invested \$15,000,000 with the  
15 proviso that Reston buy up the interest-free mortgage - which  
16 then had eight years to run. To buy up the mortgage took ten  
17 and a half million, which left the project with four and a  
18 half million in cash - which was used up almost as soon as it  
19 was received. The first residents had moved in by this time.  
20

21 Why Gulf wanted Reston to buy up the mortgage was a mystery,  
22 since it was interest free. Bob thinks it was their strange  
23 idea that they wanted a first mortgage rather than a second  
24 mortgage - a semantic rather than a practical difference.  
25 The cash actually received was used to pay off temporary  
26 bank loans and other expenses. However, it was the United  
27 Virginia Bank that kept Reston going; they were very  
28 supportive.  
29

30 The Gulf participation didn't diminish the need for more  
31 capital and so began negotiations with General Electric.  
32 Initially these negotiations went so well that GE got to  
33 the point where their executives who worked on the project  
34 brought their wives to Reston to pick out their houses.  
35 Space had also been reserved for the GE offices which were to  
36 be in residence. GE was a logical partner because their  
37 president had announced that they were going to build twenty  
38 new towns, starting one every nine months over a fifteen year  
39 period.  
40

41 Bob had suggested to them that Reston would be a great seed  
42 bed in which to train executives for the GE towns and  
43 generally learn this business. GE bought the idea and the  
44 plan went all the way to the executive whose responsibility  
45 extended to approval of \$750,000,000 of product. It was  
46 assumed that once he approved it, as he did, then the top  
47 executive group would also approve it. In fact, it was at  
48 that point when the executives had brought their wives to  
49 pick out their houses.  
50

51 Bob and his team were very excited by this because GE was  
52 going to pay \$6,000,000 for three quarters of the original



1 investment, and, since Bob's group had put in \$2,000,000,  
2 they would have received three times their original  
3 investment and would still retain a quarter of Reston.  
4  
5 To their consternation, however, GE finally turned it down.  
6 There was a lot of speculation about why they did it. The  
7 story that is accepted is that the GE executive committee  
8 requires unanimity in all their decisions and one member  
9 objected because there were blacks living in Reston. If  
10 true, that casts an ironic cloud over their plans for  
11 building twenty new towns. Had their interest been only in  
12 Reston, then their decision might be more understandable,  
13 even if ridiculous.  
14  
15 Needless to say, Bob and his group were dismayed and upset.  
16 This turndown really hurt. Then Bob had to ask Gulf for more  
17 money. What Gulf did was to work out a deal with the John  
18 Hancock Company to give Reston \$20,000,000 in a very  
19 complicated financial arrangement. Basically, it was a loan  
20 against the property although the documents didn't  
21 specifically say that. When that money began to be used up,  
22 Gulf sent a consultant to Reston to see whether they should  
23 continue to finance the project. At that point it became  
24 clear to Bob that his position as president of Reston was in  
25 jeopardy.  
26  
27 The Gulf consultant was Rob Ryan. When he arrived for his  
28 first of many visits, he looked around and, apparently, the  
29 thing that struck him as the most interesting in the whole  
30 place was Bob's desk - on which he concentrated. Later, at  
31 the final meeting in the Gulf offices in Manhattan Bob talked  
32 to Bill Henry, who was then the vice-president and slated to  
33 become president of Gulf, and strongly recommended against  
34 choosing Bob Ryan to replace him as president of Reston.  
35  
36 Bob's account of the meeting: "Well, we went into the board  
37 room with its big, long table and chairs all around it. At  
38 each place was a folder filled with stuff for the meeting.  
39 When I opened the front flap, the first thing I saw was a  
40 press release which said that Bob Ryan was to be made  
41 president of Reston. It turned out that Bob Ryan had tried  
42 to clean us out of Reston completely in the process of Gulf's  
43 final takeover. It was against Ryan's advice that I was able  
44 to get Bill Henry to give us a certain class of stock in  
45 Reston. It was a tense time for us. Ryan did take over as  
46 president and lasted for only a year; then he was fired and I  
47 cried crocodile tears."  
48  
49 Although he was no longer president, Bob was made chairman  
50 of the Reston board. The first meeting that was held after  
51 Gulf took over was in Reston and the representatives from the  
52 Pittsburgh Gulf headquarters were in attendance. As

1 chairman, Bob ran the meeting but Ryan actually did the  
2 presentations. In an ironic similarity to the aggressive  
3 negativeness shown to Bob in the sale of Carnegie hall, Ryan  
4 had prepared slide shows which were clearly intended to  
5 ridicule Bob's management of Reston. As one example: As you  
6 approach the left-hand turn to Reston from the main highway,  
7 Route 7, you see the Reston sign very close to that of an  
8 Exxon gas station at that point. Ryan pointed to this  
9 juxtaposition, which Reston couldn't control because Reston  
10 didn't own the gas station, as an example of Bob's stupid  
11 management. Ryan couldn't control it either and, after he  
12 was fired, the Reston and Exxon signs were still close  
13 together.

14  
15 Ryan continued his efforts to undermine Bob. Reston  
16 included a group of houses done by a noted Philadelphia  
17 architect named Sauer. There were three different models.  
18 One was an early American design with furniture to match;  
19 another was a generally unidentifiable style of American-  
20 American; and one was done by a woman named Emily Modino. She  
21 was a noted designer who produced a very mod, very chic  
22 model. At another meeting Ryan showed pictures only of the  
23 Modino model, with comments to the board about how  
24 unresponsive to the market Reston had been to create such  
25 an unusual design. He never showed the other two models.

26  
27 When that meeting was over, given the obvious antagonism  
28 between Bob and Ryan, Bill Henry got Bob aside and told him  
29 that this relationship wasn't going to work and Bob would  
30 have to resign. Bob said: "Listen, Bill, I'm not going to  
31 resign. If you want me out of here, you're going to have to  
32 fire me." And, Bill said: "O.K., you're fired." And Bob  
33 said: "O.K."

34  
35 Bob wasn't particularly crushed by this because it was  
36 obvious under the circumstances, that he could not perform a  
37 useful function. He knew that before he was made chairman.  
38 Had there been a different consultant the results might have  
39 been quite different.

40  
41 Bob points out that one of the dumbest things Ryan did was to  
42 discontinue a policy that had been established for all  
43 newcomers to Reston. For every new family moving in, a  
44 little basket of "necessities" was assembled. It included  
45 three meals for the family - eggs, butter, milk, steaks,  
46 vegetables, and so on, and it was all waiting in the  
47 refrigerator with a welcoming note. At that time the cost to  
48 Reston was about fifteen dollars for each family. The  
49 objective was to make them feel really welcome - and, in the  
50 process, mute some of the obvious nitpicking irritations and  
51 complaints that usually go with moving into a new home.  
52 Nobody has ever moved into a new house that was perfect in



1 every detail. Bob was sure they appreciated a warm welcome  
2 and they reciprocated by overlooking some of the obvious  
3 problems in getting them moved in.

4  
5 Another act in the drama of Reston was played out before Bob  
6 left. Even though Gulf had been making money with Reston,  
7 they decided to sell out to Mobil. The idea that Reston was  
8 not an economically sound operation was nonsense. Gulf had  
9 been charging ten million dollars a year for overhead on  
10 thirty million dollars of sales - a really extravagant load.  
11 Even so, they were in the black and, in many years earned  
12 more than that. But, apparently it wasn't enough, so they  
13 sold out to Mobil at ten thousand an acre - which Bob had  
14 bought at fifteen hundred an acre. Now, over a period of a  
15 few years, Mobil has stopped selling land at three hundred  
16 thousand an acre because they think it's a dumb idea to sell  
17 it - which it is.

18  
19 The final negotiation with Gulf was for the stock which Bill  
20 Henry had given Bob. In negotiation with the then president  
21 of Gulf-Reston Bob's group sold it for \$1,000,000.

22  
23 After Bob was fired, there was a very, very touching, moving  
24 ceremony, a farewell. A lot of people knew about it and  
25 quite a few people turned out. Bob reminisces:

26  
27 "Well, Reston certainly was a place whose time had come, to  
28 coin a phrase. There was a lot of publicity that we had no  
29 part in after we were launched. The campaign to get us  
30 approved by the board of supervisors was a campaign, but,  
31 thereafter, the publicity became an international phenomenon.  
32 People came to see us from all over the world with their  
33 cameras, television things, and recorders and pencils and  
34 paper to write us up."

35  
36 "One amusing example was being interviewed for Japanese  
37 television. They put this wire down my sleeve for the  
38 microphone and earpiece and then we faced each other on the  
39 plaza. I looked at the Japanese and he talked Japanese to  
40 me. In my ear was coming an instant English translation from  
41 a van that they had parked at a distance. Well, I found that  
42 I couldn't handle it because I kept watching his mouth and  
43 being astonished at what was coming into my ear. So,  
44 finally, I called it off and got him to agree to give me  
45 very, very short questions; and then it worked. Then he  
46 spoke Japanese to me and my little earphone told me what he  
47 had asked me and I was able to answer him."

48  
49 "Another memory to give a feeling of the internationality of  
50 this thing was when I entertained the mayor of Seoul. He  
51 came over with his interpreter and we sat in the Bowman  
52 house, he and I in our chairs and the interpreter between us.

1 In no time flat I began to feel like I was a potentate or a  
2 head of state or something."

3  
4 "There were all sorts of funny things about the way people  
5 reacted to Reston. For example, Ada Louise Huxtable, who was  
6 then architecture critic for The New York Times, came down  
7 and spent a couple of days in Reston in its early days, after  
8 some people had moved in. One of the things I said to her  
9 was: 'The thing that drives me nuts is people talking about  
10 Reston as a totally planned community, because that's the  
11 last thing we have in mind. The whole idea is that planning  
12 will evolve over the years from the desires of the people  
13 who live here. It's their preferences and needs that will  
14 determine how the town works."

15  
16 "Then came the day when the front page of the New York Times  
17 carried the Reston story by Ada Louise Huxtable, and it was  
18 continued on a back page somewhere. When I turned to that  
19 page, there was a headline across the whole page that said:  
20 "Totally Planned Community". So I called Ada Louise to tell  
21 her what a fabulous article it was, and she said she was glad  
22 I called her because she thought I'd be sore because of the  
23 headline. I found out later that there are headline writers  
24 who write the headlines, not the reporters who write the  
25 articles."

26  
27 "We got all sorts of weird reactions, even from liberals who  
28 were hostile because they assumed that Reston was a rigidly  
29 planned community. Well, I believe that there is no one in  
30 the world more frustrated than a liberal who sees his dream  
31 become a reality."

32  
33 Under President Kennedy a Year 2000 plan had been developed  
34 for Washington and Reston was included in it because Bob had  
35 been able to influence some of the people who drew up the  
36 plan. Kennedy had issued a dictum to the effect that all  
37 government agencies in the future that could do so would be  
38 located in new towns to help further their development.

39  
40 Following up on that, Jerry Weisner, who was then the  
41 President's scientific advisor called an inter-departmental  
42 meeting to which Bob was invited. At that meeting were many  
43 bureaucrats, including Holloman, who was then an assistant  
44 secretary of some department, Weber, who was then secretary  
45 of H.U.D., and other assorted secretaries or assistant  
46 secretaries. After Bob made his presentation and the meeting  
47 was over, in their enthusiasm his audience did everything but  
48 carry him around on their shoulders. They resolved formally  
49 and in writing that they would use all their influence with  
50 the government to foster Reston - and that was the end of it.  
51 Bob says: "That was the high water mark of my excitement with  
52 the government. I went out of there on cloud one-hundred-



1 and-nine and never heard from them again."

2  
3 Although Bob and his staff had completed the necessary  
4 surveys, Gulf, in the end, had to provide the land for a  
5 government building. A very complex financial deal was  
6 involved but it amounted to a non-profit loan. The  
7 government paid only five and a half per cent of the cost of  
8 their building. This was in marked contrast to the building  
9 of the churches.

10  
11 Even before the first buildings had started, Bpb had to deal  
12 with the representatives of thirteen different church  
13 denominations to discuss the church planning. Carol Lubin  
14 had organized a meeting in the Bowman House to discuss how  
15 many churches would be built. Interestingly, the number that  
16 emerged from the meeting was very close to the original  
17 planning estimate and, in fact to the number actually built  
18 by the time Reston was finished, thirty-five churches in all.

19  
20 When the planning session was over, the subject of paying for  
21 the land came up, and Bob made it clear that, like other  
22 residents of Reston, the churches should also pay for their  
23 land, particularly so that the money could be used for  
24 community-wide facilities. The thirteen church  
25 representatives went pale but Bob went on to reassure them.

26  
27 Bob said: "When it comes to selling any one of you a  
28 property, we will tell you everything we know about value as  
29 it relates to that property. You will take that information,  
30 and you will decide what you are going to pay for it and that  
31 will be the price. We'll have no negotiations". The church  
32 representatives agreed and this arrangement worked well for  
33 the first three churches. They came back with prices which  
34 Bob thought were fair and the church groups thought it was a  
35 fine way to do it.

36  
37 Then there was a problem. The Lutherans decided to build a  
38 high-rise H.U.D. sponsored facility for the elderly. In the  
39 H.U.D. application they had put down the value of the land as  
40 \$2.00 a square foot, or \$80,000 an acre. They said that, in  
41 theory, based on the data given them, that's what they  
42 should have to pay for it, but they were reluctant to pay  
43 that much. After some discussion, Bob settled for a much,  
44 much lower price.

45  
46 In the end, the relative isolation of Reston from heavy  
47 traffic between Washington and Dulles airport was broken when  
48 the original one-way Dulles airport road was given parallel  
49 two way lanes and became a toll road. Then, development ran  
50 riot in the whole area. There are now tens of millions of  
51 square feet of office space planned in the area. One project  
52 alone involves eleven hundred acres with twelve million

1 square feet planned. There are many projects out there in  
2 addition to Reston. Aside from the Dulles - Washington  
3 highway, which can get you there in about twenty-five  
4 minutes, there is now talk about a rapid transit line from  
5 Dulles through Reston, with one stop at Reston, and then on  
6 to Washington. If it happens, it would tie in with the  
7 subway system.

8  
9 Bob says: "Whether it happens or not, I feel good about the  
10 way Reston has developed and I think the people there will  
11 keep things the way they want. That's really all I wanted."

12  
13 Reston is a phenomenon because, since the start of  
14 civilization, men have been planning cities without any real  
15 understanding of what makes some delightful and others  
16 atrocious. In many, if not most cases, cities and towns have  
17 not been planned at all. Often, the patterns of streets in  
18 many cities have simply followed paths and tracks made by  
19 early settlers and their animals. In some cases cities have  
20 been planned as rigidly geometric squares and rectangles,  
21 with wide, straight streets and open plazas.

22  
23 Washington, D.C., on the other hand, was planned like a huge  
24 wheel with the streets radiating from the center like the  
25 spokes of that wheel. In most of the cities we know, there is  
26 no evidence of planning at all; business, commerce, and  
27 manufacturing relentlessly drive the creation and, in many  
28 cases, the destruction of communities and neighborhoods.

29  
30 Except in a few recent cases, like Radburn in New Jersey,  
31 Columbia in Maryland, Tapiola in Finland, and some planned  
32 communities in England, little, if any attention has been  
33 given by most city planners to the ways in which people live,  
34 work, amuse themselves, or grow old, and to the facilities  
35 and economic needs of those people throughout their lives.  
36 Reston is universally recognized as the most creative  
37 embodiment of a planned community which satisfies the needs  
38 of all its residents.

39  
40 To achieve his goal, Simon had no real guidelines - only his  
41 dream of what a new city should be like. He studied the  
42 history of planned communities, consulted with planners and  
43 architects of varying philosophies and concepts, talked with  
44 recreation and religious specialists, lawyers, and  
45 economists. After weighing all the advice, more often than  
46 not he made his decisions on the basis of his own judgment  
47 and instincts. He hired architects to create the master plan  
48 but the concepts were his own.

49 One interesting example was his insistence on a high rise  
50 apartment building in the center of the first village of the  
51 seven that make up the town. Most of his advisors argued  
52 that no one would want to live in a high rise apartment



1 building in a bucolic environment like Reston, about 20 miles  
2 from Washington. The high rise was one of the first  
3 buildings fully rented. Simon also insisted, against  
4 repeated advice, on the two floors of apartments over the  
5 commercial and retail establishments, and these too were  
6 fully rented almost immediately.

7  
8 Reston today is a testament to Simon's vision and  
9 determination, for the Town, in almost all details, fulfills  
10 his hopes and expectations. The town is composed of seven  
11 Villages, each with its own unique physical design and  
12 features. The mix of structures includes high rise  
13 apartments, townhouses, detached dwellings, retail businesses  
14 with two floors of apartments above, government and private  
15 business establishments, community meeting structures,  
16 churches, swimming pools, tennis courts, riding trails. The  
17 town has a full range of social services, including child  
18 care facilities, adolescent counseling centers, recreational  
19 facilities of all types and a hospital.

20  
21 In Lake Ann, the first village cluster, there is a lake with  
22 boating and canoeing, open plazas, restaurants. And all of  
23 it is arranged so as to preserve the natural beauty of the  
24 abundant woods and streams which flow through the town. Each  
25 succeeding village cluster has its own unique features and  
26 amenities.

27  
28 The population target of 70,000 is being approached rapidly.  
29 As of the beginning of this year, the total population now  
30 stands at over 50,000. And many of the residents who came  
31 to Reston early in its development still live there, having  
32 gone through the life cycle pattern predicted by Simon. They  
33 came as single, unattached people, married, raised children,  
34 worked in Reston, and moved successively from apartment to  
35 townhouse, to a detached house, then back to a townhouse and  
36 finally to an apartment. The Town is a microcosm of a  
37 complete society with all of the complex fabric of personal  
38 and working relationships, shopping, recreation, leisure, and  
39 the exercise of personal interests in clubs, hobbies, etc.

40  
41 From the beginning, Simon determined that Reston would not  
42 be at the mercy of the automobile. Walkways in the town roam  
43 over hundreds of acres, and residents can walk to the homes  
44 of their friends, to their church or school, the tennis  
45 courts and swimming pool, and even to their jobs, and be  
46 separated from automobile traffic by the ingenious use of  
47 bridges and underpasses.

48  
49 By themselves, the aesthetic values and natural beauty of  
50 Reston do not make it a town. Without jobs, Reston would be  
51 just another bedroom community from which the residents  
52 would have to commute to Washington for work and play. In

1 his planning, Simon set aside one seventh of the tract for  
2 industrial development to attract industries.  
3 It was a very slow process in the beginning, but a  
4 considerable number of the commercial facilities are now  
5 occupied by high-tech companies. Among them are: Sperry, two  
6 subsidiaries of General Telephone Electronics, An AT&T  
7 marketing sales center, and some forty other corporate  
8 residents in computer technology, telecommunications and  
9 electronic product design and assembly industries. There  
10 are, in addition, numerous government agencies like the U.S.  
11 Geological Survey with its two thousand federal employees.

12  
13 Reston is a planned community - a label which, because of its  
14 implication of regimentation, has generated criticism from  
15 liberals and conservative alike; Americans have traditionally  
16 resisted planning. But, in fact, Reston was planned to  
17 provide a maximum of free choice in personal life styles and  
18 activities. Judging from the steadily enlarging population  
19 and the continuing enthusiasm of the residents and their  
20 annual homage to Simon, there has been a feeling of great  
21 freedom in the wealth of alternative choices and life styles  
22 which are available to residents.

23  
24 Considering the magnitude of the financial and management  
25 difficulties and risks involved in the creation of Reston,  
26 one wonders about the motivations of its founder and how he  
27 came to embark on this ambitious project.

28  
29 These days, being a amateur pianist, he still takes piano  
30 lessons and plays chamber music with friends weekly. The  
31 same love of beauty which inspired the design of Reston is  
32 evident in the landscaping of his home. He tends his  
33 beautiful garden, reads, and spends much pleasurable time  
34 with his family walking, exploring nearby places of interest,  
35 attending the theatre and concerts, and playing scrabble.  
36 His wife, Dorothy Monet the writer, is his most formidable  
37 opponent.

38  
39 At seventy-six he does not indulge in self aggrandizement and  
40 has never courted public praise nor publicity. When asked,  
41 he may describe himself as a real estate developer rather  
42 than a social philosopher, but his own description of what he  
43 was after when he began the Reston project speaks for itself.

44  
45 In the creation of Reston, Robert E. Bob enunciated the  
46 following goals:

- 47  
48 1. That the widest choice of opportunities be made available  
49 for the full use of leisure time. This means that the New  
50 Town should provide a wide range of recreational and cultural  
51 facilities as well as an environment for privacy.



1 2. That it be possible for anyone to remain in a single  
2 neighborhood throughout his life if he desires, it being  
3 neither inevitable nor always desirable to be uprooted. By  
4 providing the fullest range of housing styles and prices -  
5 from high rise efficiencies to six-bedroom townhouses and  
6 detached houses - housing needs can be met at a variety of  
7 income levels, and at different stages of family life. This  
8 kind of mixture permits residents to remain rooted in the  
9 community - if they so choose - even though their particular  
10 housing needs change. Variety in housing permits a parallel  
11 heterogeneity in population that spells a lively and varied  
12 community.

13  
14 3 That the importance and dignity of each individual be the  
15 focal point for all planning, and take precedence over large  
16 scale concepts.

17  
18 4. That people be able to live and work in the same  
19 community.

20  
21 5. That commercial, cultural and recreational facilities be  
22 made available to the residents from the outset of the  
23 development - not years later.

24  
25 6. That beauty - structural and natural - is a necessity of  
26 the good life and should be fostered.

27  
28 7. That Reston, conceived as a private enterprise and a  
29 model for future development elsewhere, be a financial  
30 success.

31 Robert E. Simon, Jr. achieved his goals.

32  
33  
34  
35  
36 Michael Leyzorek, Princeton, NJ.