

## WOULD BUILD ONLY ON 50% OF SITE AREA

Architect of the Rockefeller  
Model Apartments Shows  
Plans to State Board.

### VIOLATIONS IN NEW DESIGNS

A. J. Thomas at Hearing Admits  
This, but Says He Will  
Explain by Letter.

Andrew J. Thomas, architect, who designed the Rockefeller model apartments in the Bronx, testified yesterday before the State Commission for Revision of the Tenement House act, that in the larger building operations the law should limit the extent of the ground to be actually covered by a building to 50 per cent. of the entire area included in the site. He said his experience had shown that even a smaller percentage of "ground coverage" was advisable from an economic standpoint as well as for sunlight and ventilation.

Members of the commission, which held an all-day session in City Hall, examined several drawings of apartments submitted by Mr. Thomas, who explained that the modern structure, covering less ground, had, in addition to smaller construction costs, a readily rentable aspect. He said that where a building had four streets bounding it only 46 per cent. of the total area should be occupied. After displaying one of his most recent plans the witness admitted that, in several particulars, it represented violations of the existing Tenement House act, but refused to explain what these were. He said he would furnish those facts in writing later.

Mr. Thomas said that garages built into or against apartment structures should not be permitted, on the ground that late arrivals would disturb the sleep of the tenants.

At the opening of the session Harold Riegelman, counsel for the commission, praised the action of Magistrate Simpson in fining several real estate owners who had violated the Tenement House act. He said the press should be commended for holding such offenders up "to the public gaze."

George A. Bagge, Chairman of the Tenement House Committee of the New York Society of Architects, recommended that the law be revised to prohibit the construction of living rooms with only "borrowed light." George B. Ford of the Technical Advisory Corporation to the New York Tenement House Law Revision Committee, submitted a long written statement which read, in part:

"The home of the future, of whatever type, should provide for sunlight, light and air in every window. It should give privacy for family life that is distinctly lacking today. It should provide better protection against fire and theft. To make streets safer, cleaner and quieter the properly designed dead-end street, which has become popular in Europe, should be encouraged here."

Testimony of earlier witnesses that gas should be prohibited in kitchenettes and serving pantries was attacked by A. Gordon King, service engineer for the American Gas Association.

"We do not fear electrical competition," he said, "but we think there is discrimination in favor of it. Electricity for small kitchens is not the solution of the problem. Figures of fire losses in New York from 1914 to 1925 show that 3.65 per cent. were due to fires caused by electricity, while only 1.55 per cent. were due to gas."

Leonard Cox, architect, testified that the great height of one apartment building compelled retaliation by the builder next door, and that as a result the commission in its revisions should not confine itself to the welfare of the poor man of the real tenements, but should protect the "poor rich man" who is now, in several instances, "living at the bottom of a 30-story well," with insufficient light, sun and air.

Others who testified included John T. Briggs, architect; Samuel Minskoff, a Bronx builder; Arthur Hogan, John T. Boyd, Jr., William Rouse, Albert Gross, Emory Roth and Matthew del Gaudio, all architects. The hearings will be resumed next Monday at 10:15 A. M.