

THE MAIL BAG

Trained Surveyors Needed

Hi Mr. Editor:

Keep up the good work, Charlie -

I am enclosing an editorial from the Ottawa Journal of November 17th. It's worth putting in an issue of "The Ontario Land Surveyor". See you in February.

Charles G. Taylor  
Pembroke, Ont.

*Editor's Note: Thank you Charlie. The Editorial appears elsewhere in this issue.*

An Approved Contract Document?

The Editor,  
Ontario Land Surveyor.

This writer would like to put forth a suggestion to the Association which would be of a primary interest to those Surveyors who are engaged in private practice.

With development as it is today, I would think that a great many Surveyors located in or near major communities find that a majority of their work is subdivision layout. This work, as we all know, requires a considerable outlay for the Surveyor in material, time and wages; however, it seems to be another problem to ensure prompt payment upon completion of the work and delivery of the plans.

We are aware that we have ways and means to protect this investment; however, it usually involves legal expenses which eat out another portion

of the profits such as they are.

Our firm in the past has set up minor contracts to be signed by the Developer and Surveyor as to payment upon receipt of plans and monthly payments for the balance. This has worked out quite satisfactorily; however, this writer would like to see an actual contract document published with the backing of the Association which would be legal and binding on both parties. Such a document which might enable a Surveyor to request an advance to offset some of his expenses might do a great deal to relieve the minds of those in practice, who have to utilize their time and efforts to ensure payments for work completed some time before.

STARR & TARASICK,

W.P. Tarasick, O. L.S.  
Port Credit, Ontario.

SURVEYS ACT, SECTION 4, SUBSECTION (1) - A REASONABLE CHARGE?

by W. N. Wildman, O. L.S.

How much, if at all should one charge for showing ones' survey information to other Surveyors? This is something which is often informally discussed and has led to many arguments, ill-feeling and lack of co-operation between fellow-surveyors, and is

a problem which the Association cannot easily solve by legislation.

When a surveyor needs more information than he can find in the field, Registry Office, Land Titles Office, Public Authorities or plans and notes

in his possession, he must go to another surveyor to get the relevant data.

At present about 9 out of every 10 Surveyors are very helpful and co-operative when approached by another for information. However there are several who are quite unsociable and who either strongly resent giving help or refuse it. Some say they haven't time to look; some say "come back next week"; some say "no"; when they actually have; yet others say "what the - - - are you doing in my town"; or, "how much is it worth to you"; or "25 dollars please".

The effect of all this is to deter surveyors from going to other surveyors' offices for information, and thus to increase the possibility of making errors by not having all the evidence available. It is therefore a direct cause of 'poor surveying', and as there is a strong movement at present to raise the general standard of surveying, now is a good time to decrease this cause.

The main offenders seem to be ones who have settled in a certain area and regard themselves as having an exclusive franchise in the area. The reasons for this non-co-operation must be motivated by: (A) a fear of competition, or (B) a fear of discovery of poor surveying or errors which the incomer might find, or (C) tradition, or (D) to 'make some easy money'. The attitude could not arise out of the possibility of the incomer doing inferior work or the reaction surely would be to help him do it right? If the unpleasant reaction is caused by "A", "B", "C", or "D" then it is definitely wrong, and should not be permitted. Perhaps some have not kept up to date with modern instruments and techniques, and feel that they cannot compete in accuracy or effectiveness with progressive companies, or perhaps they have grown too accustomed to the previous lack of surveyors, and do not

realize that many clients nowadays hire a surveyor because he is a good surveyor, and not because he is a local surveyor. The companies with the best reputations always seem to be the most helpful when approached by others.

The solution to this problem can only be found by the realization of the adverse significance of the reluctance to give information; and if a charge is to be made to compensate for the surveyors' time, then there should either be a fixed price of, say \$5, or a straight O. L. S. time rate chargeable; also a print of the resulting plan should be sent to the 'local' surveyor. If a charge is made, the amount should be agreed upon while still in the surveyors' office, so that it can be chargeable to the client, thus obviating the receiving of an unexpected bill after the job has been invoiced.

The very act of one surveyor's going to another for field notes shows his intention to do a good survey, use all the information available, and to co-operate with the 'local' surveyor.

The fact that over 90% of the surveyors are fully co-operative and do not charge, shows that a great majority do favour the free use of survey data and so there would only be a few who would need to change their policies. This survey-data hunting is also one of the few means of getting to know ones' fellow surveyors; sometimes resident surveyors in the more isolated areas don't see another practitioner from one annual meeting to the next, and they are usually delighted when called on, and do all in their power to help.

I hope that this article will at least initiate some written discussion on the subject so that all the different views on the matter may become known to the whole membership of the Association.