

# RANCHO SANTA FE

*California's  
Perfectly Planned Community*

By LEE SHIPPEY

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ARCADE, COMMERCIAL BUILDING, RANCHO SANTA FE, DEL MAR, CALIFORNIA  
 REQUA AND JACKSON, ARCHITECTS

Frontispiece  
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## *Rancho Santa Fe — California's Perfectly Planned Community*

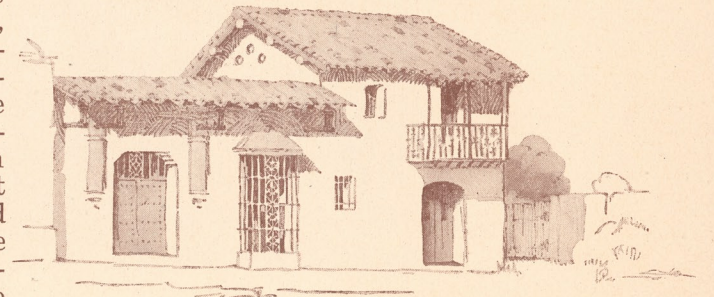
By LEE SHIPPEY

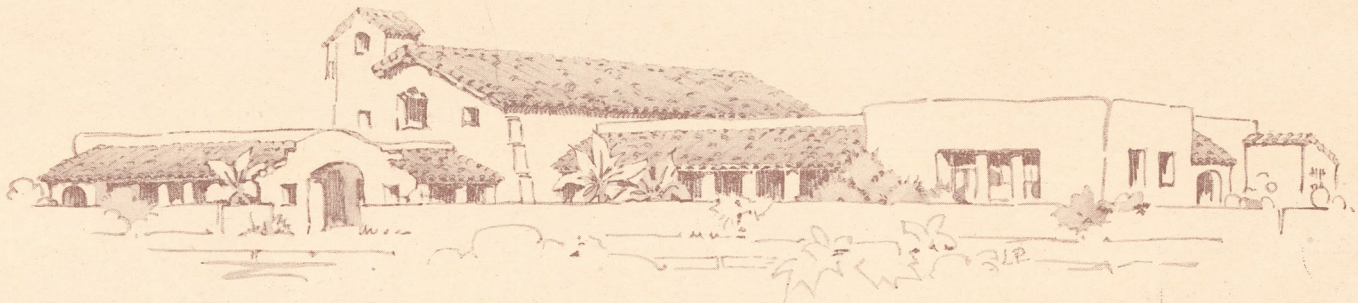


**T**HINK of a park-like area of fifteen square miles in which many hundred handsome homes and a village containing all necessary educational and business buildings are to be constructed—and all of these improvements to be completed under the supervision of an architect. Could you find one square mile, much less fifteen, along the Champs

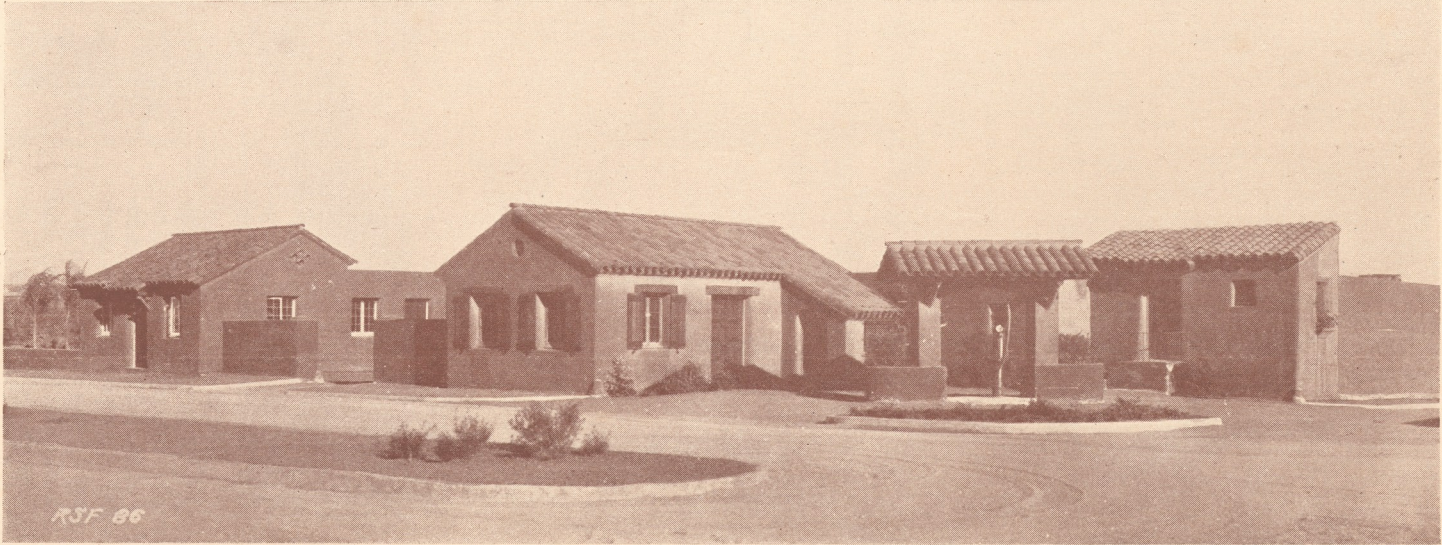
Elysees or Riverside Drive, in Irvington-on-Hudson or Piedmont or Beverly Hills, in which there are no inharmonious structures or displeasing views?

Yet there is one such community—or, at least, one now is building. It has been planned on the theory that often your neighbors' architecture is quite as important to you as your own, and the planners have recognized the importance of architectural supervision of the entire area. They have safeguarded it by restrictions such as never before have been put on a similarly large area, and it is worth noting, for the benefit of all other communities, that those restrictions are



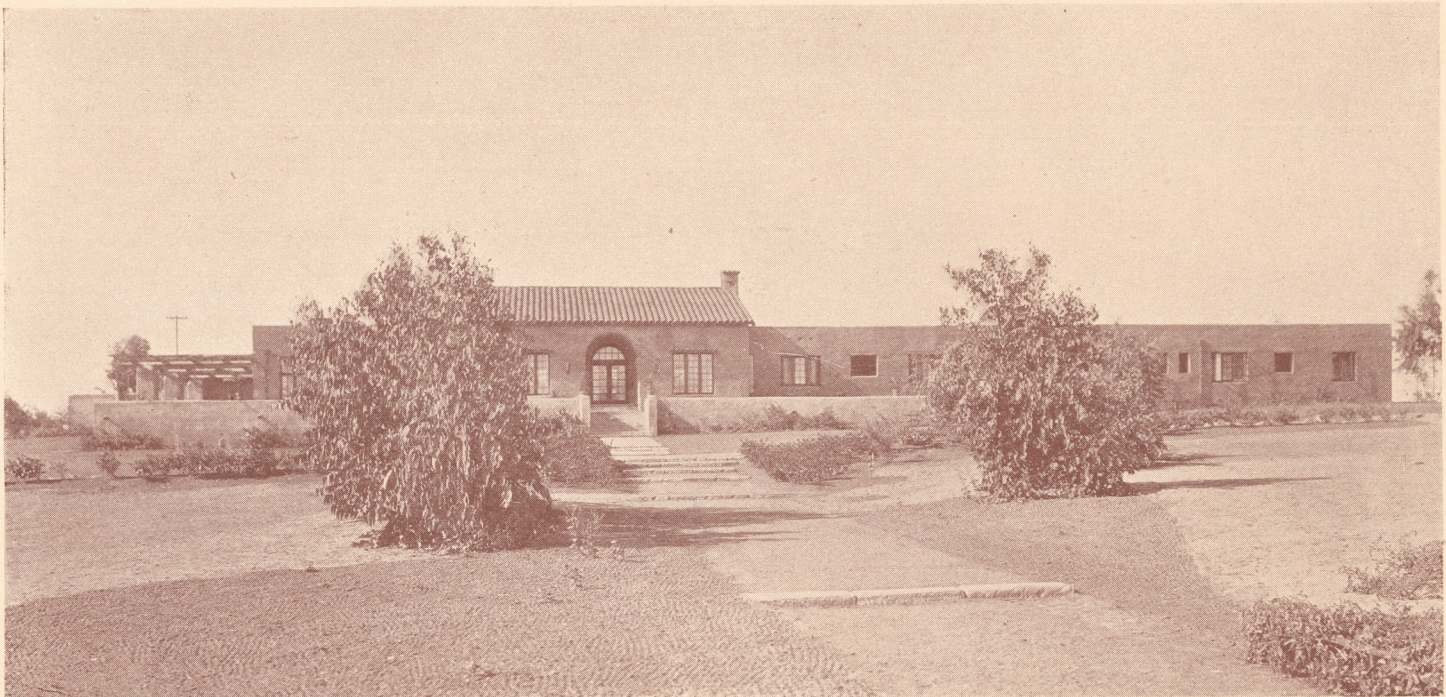


SCHOOL AND CIVIC AUDITORIUM (NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION), REQUA AND JACKSON, ARCHITECTS



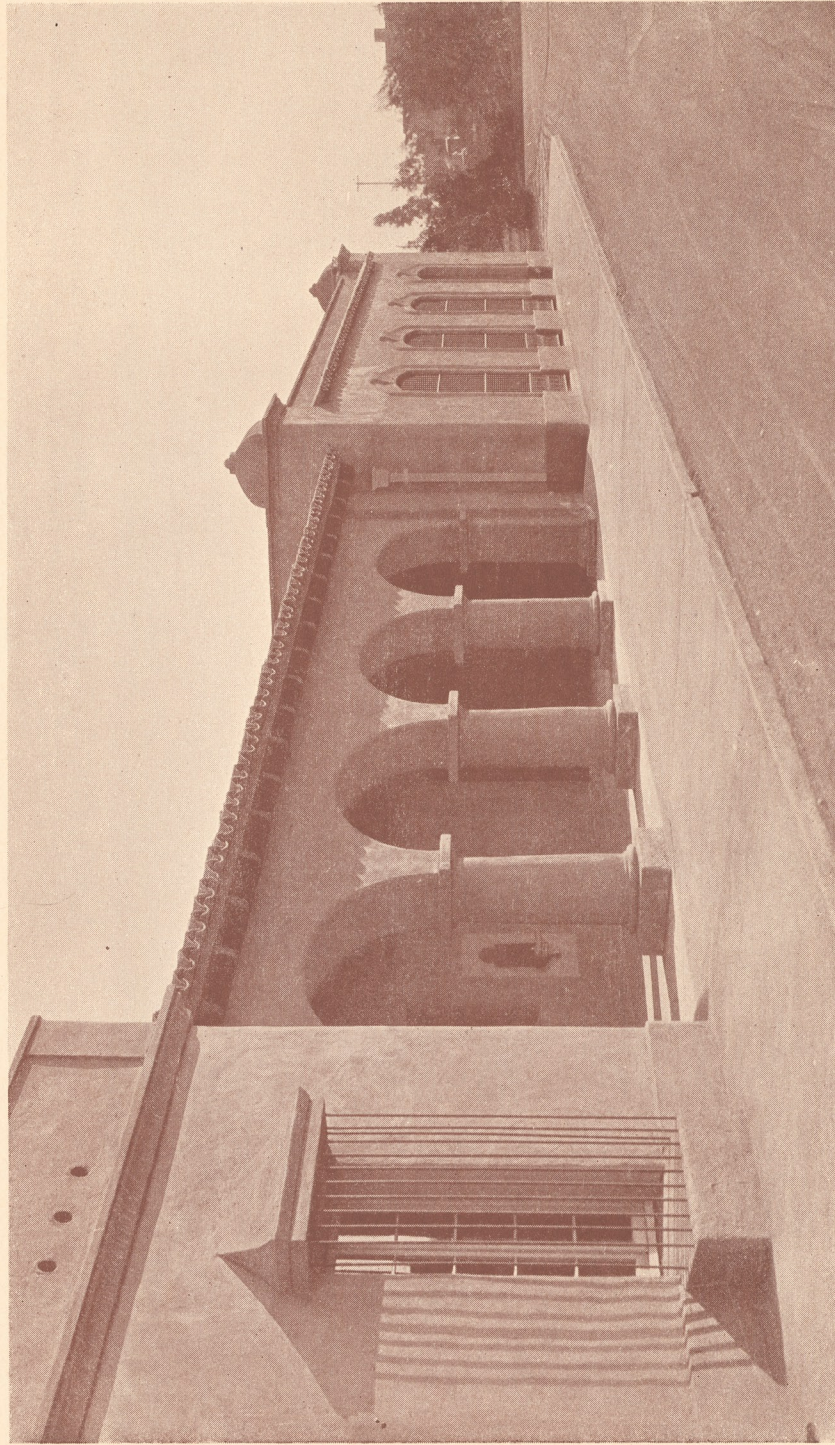
FILLING STATION, ACCESSORIES SALES ROOM AND WOMEN'S REST ROOM, RANCHO SANTA FE, DEL MAR, CALIFORNIA

THE ARCHITECT AND ENGINEER

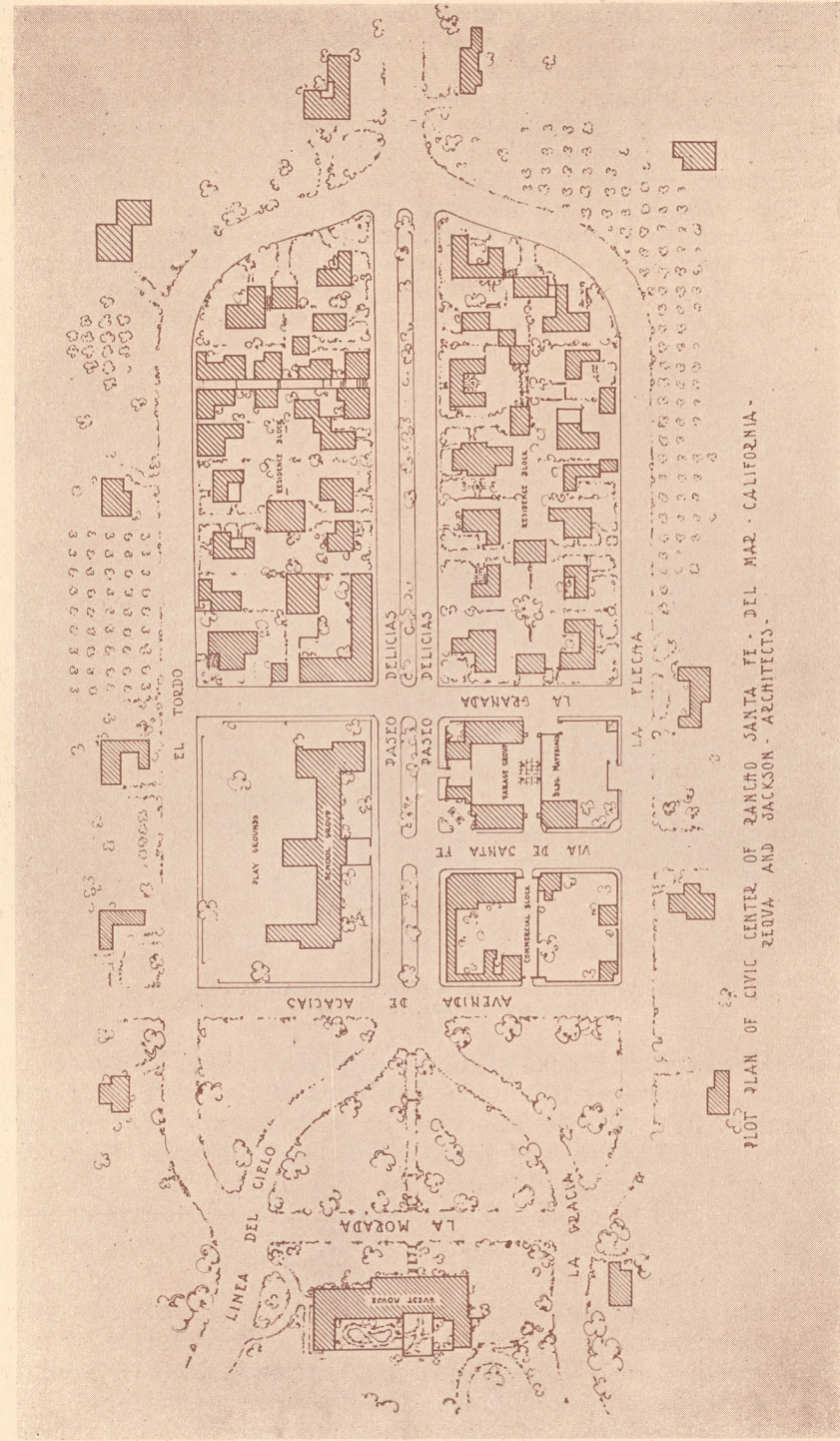


LA MORADA, THE GUEST HOUSE, RANCHO SANTA FE, DEL MAR  
REQUA AND JACKSON, ARCHITECTS

February, 1924



FACADE, COMMERCIAL BUILDING, RANCHO SANTA FE, DEL MAR  
 REQUA AND JACKSON, ARCHITECTS



PLOT PLAN OF CIVIC CENTER OF RANCHO SANTA FE, DEL MAR - CALIFORNIA -  
 REQUA AND JACKSON - ARCHITECTS.

PLOT PLAN, CIVIC CENTER, RANCHO SANTA FE, DEL MAR  
 REQUA AND JACKSON, ARCHITECTS

proving a distinct advantage rather than a handicap to this development. People such as any community would be glad to have are eager to associate themselves with an enterprise which has become widely known as "the most perfectly planned land development project in the world." Everyone who is building a home there is not only willingly but eagerly consulting with the company's architects—first as to the site on which to build and then as to the building itself. And those who have watched the advancement of the undertaking are convinced that the result, within a few years, will be an achievement without rival.

The Santa Fe Land Improvement Company, subsidiary of the Santa Fe Railway system, bought Rancho Santa Fe, a 9000-acre cattle range in Northern San Diego County, California, years ago. It was a place to which nature had been most generous—undulating slopes guarded on

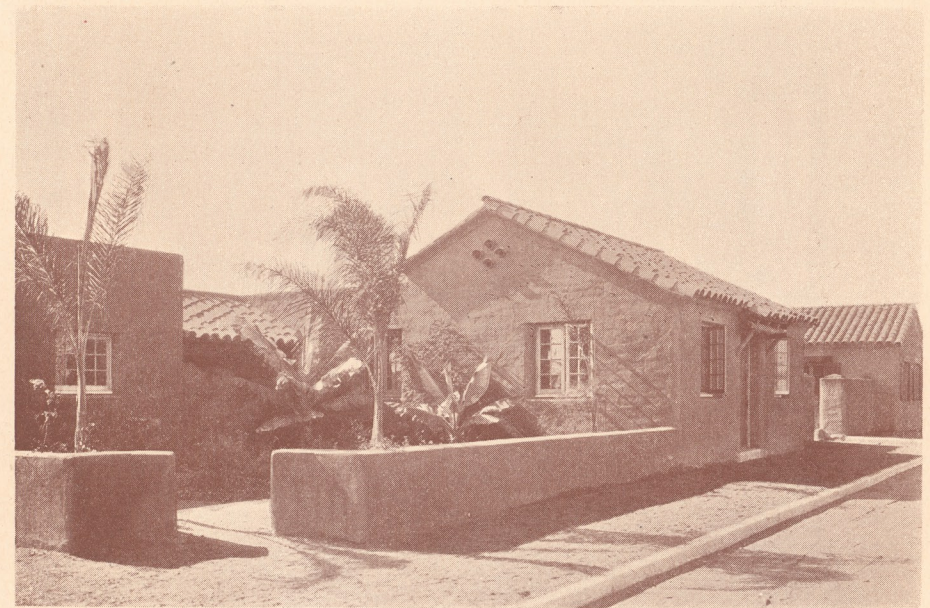


GASOLINE FILLING STATION, RANCHO SANTA FE  
Requa and Jackson, Architects

three sides by mountain-etched skyline and within sight of the sea to the West, as if the encircling mountains had flung out an arm of friendly hills to protect it. And it was sentient with history and romance. Originally it was a Spanish land grant to Don Juan Mario Osuna, soldier of fortune and first alcalde of San Diego, who chose it as the loveliest and most fertile spot he could find and built on it an adobe manor house which still stands. The estate and its owner, Leandro Osuna, who inherited it, figured prominently in the war with Mexico.

The Santa Fe interests, with vision beyond that of many great business concerns, recognized the opportunity to convert the virgin range into an intensively beautified and highly organized community. They studied its possibilities and after deciding upon a plan for the best general development, they had experts—qualified architects, landscape, irrigation and other engineers, devote over a year to comprehensive study, before final plans were approved.

It is noteworthy that landscape and architecture were the first considerations in this "most perfectly planned" community. The first definite step was the dividing of the area into some 400 units, ranging from five to forty acres, each of which offered an attractive homesite, so that the completed community would somewhat resemble one of the beautiful chateau districts of Southern Europe. In the heart of these a group of commercial buildings, a delightful guest house and a school group were planned, Colonial-Spanish architecture being decided on as the appropriate expression of the history and romantic atmosphere of the region. Next, a graceful system of highways, 53 miles of fine hard roads serving every tract, was laid out. And not until that background was complete—the whole area laid off like an immense landscape garden in the midst of which the civic center gleamed like a mirage of some lovely village in



A CORNER GARDEN, RANCHO SANTA FE  
Requa and Jackson, Architects

the Pyrenees—were those who sought to build country homes there encouraged to proceed.

Messrs. Requa & Jackson of San Diego were chosen as architects for the project because of experience and special training for the type of architecture selected. Mr. Richard S. Requa, in specializing for Spanish design, traveled through many Latin countries and studied many an unfrequented street and picturesque Spanish village. Both Mr. Requa and Mr. Jackson are students of Aztec-Hopi Indian influence on Spanish architecture. The remodelling of Ojai, one of the most interesting architectural achievements in California, is one of their successes.

These architects were commissioned to design all buildings of the civic center group, thereby establishing a standard for other structures which soon will crown commanding sites in the landscape. All home designs must meet with their approval, so far as exteriors are concerned, so that an ever harmonious picture may be seen whichever way one looks in a region with a thousand beautiful, inspiring and even thrilling views.



LOUNGING ROOM, GUEST HOUSE, RANCHO SANTA FE, DEL MAR  
REQUA AND JACKSON, ARCHITECTS

The old adobe mansion of Don Juan, with walls three feet thick, cool and inviting and reposing serenely under the shade of giant pepper trees with an air of solid and substantial hospitality after three-quarters of a century, convinced the architects that adobe was the structural material best suited.

The first building erected was La Morada ("the home")—the guest house of the project. The substantial and restful simplicity of its design expresses eloquently the charming Latin note dominating the type of architecture to prevail. Its broad hospitable terrace invites, its wide doors and windows give it a friendly openness.

Inside, although there is every modern comfort, the atmosphere of old Spain is maintained. One enters a charming room. At one end a Spanish balcony and broad arches suggest "los portales"; in the other end is a large friendly fireplace. The decorative fineness of the entire room lies in the exquisite simplicity of proportions and in the velvety texture of the walls. No pictures are on the walls and they would be out of place there; but every window frames a picture of exquisite beauty.

Not far from the guest house, like a busy village near the great folk's chateau in the Pyrenees, are quaint shops and offices, and across the plaza from them, splendidly expressing the refined educational and social activities of the community, will soon arise the master building of the group—an inspiring, spacious structure, accommodating all school grades, high school and civic auditorium.

Not even a gas station in this "perfectly planned" project may be inartistic or offensive to the eyes. This adjunct to the garage group looks like a quaint old village well, around which native flowers grow, and it probably is the only filling station in America that speeding motorists halt their cars merely to look at and admire. The shops are so softened by true Spanish feeling that the commonplace of commercialism is disguised.

The restrictions provide that each of the 400 tract buyers in Rancho Santa Fe, whether his tract be small or large, must build a home to fulfil the requirements. Restrictions range from five thousand to fifteen thousand dollars. Many of the tracts have been purchased by eastern or northern business men and bankers who will engage expert superintendents for the development of their model orchards. That means that eventually considerably more than the 400 homes originally provided for must be built, and caretakers' residences, no less than those of owners, must bear out the idea of beauty and harmony. Garages and all service buildings must meet the restrictions.

It is an interesting fact that the architectural restrictions are attracting quite as many people to Rancho Santa Fe as are the demonstrations of conditions ideally suited to the culture of semi-tropic fruits. Already nearly half of the great park has been bought and is being developed by people eager to fulfil all the restrictions, eager to help build up an ideal—eager, in short, to do their part toward making Rancho Santa Fe the most beautiful and artistically harmonious area of its size in the world. That ought to be enough to teach other community planners and developers the importance and feasibility of architectural supervision for an entire community.