

Kennedy Museum Blocked By Combination of Forces

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CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Feb. 11 —The plans for a museum honoring President Kennedy near Harvard Square fell victim to determined local opposition, changing times and inflation.

The decade-old plans for the Kennedy Memorial called for a museum, library and archives and academic facilities in a park on the edge of the Charles River near Harvard where the late President graduated in the class of 1940.

But in recent years, the project has met with sharp criticism from residents from surrounding neighborhoods who feared it would attract hordes of tourists, automobiles, fast food franchises and souvenir shops into the already congested Harvard Square area.

Last Thursday, Stephen E. Smith, the Kennedy in-law who heads the John F. Kennedy Library Corporation, announced that the library would not be built in Cambridge because of local resistance. The archives of the President's papers might remain here, he said, or the entire complex might be removed elsewhere.

Looking for New Site

The Library Corporation is now looking for a new site.

"I'm sad," Mr. Smith said in a telephone interview. "I'm disappointed but, truly, most of all, I'm sad."

Unlike other Presidential libraries, which have steadily grown in scale over the years, the Kennedy Memorial would have been in an urban setting. That, opponents said, was the problem.

The controversy here has been bitter. The opponents accused the Kennedy forces of arrogance and political maneuvering. The Library Corporation officials contended that the opposition was limited to a snobby few.

Delays in moving the trolley car barns from the site, 10 acres of which had been given by Massachusetts to the Federal Government for the memorial, delayed the project. Meanwhile, the rising cost of construction whittled away at the \$27-million that had been raised.

In the interim, the national outpouring of grief after the assassination had been replaced by a new concern for the environment and for urban values, and a less lofty view of Presidents developed during the troubled years of Vietnam and

In early December, the General Services Administration, the agency that administers the project, filed its federally required environmental impact statement. The report said that, despite the estimated one million visitors each year, the memorial would have only minimal impact on the surrounding area.

Opponents immediately suggested that the report had been rigged to favor the library corporation.

"The document seems to be very clearly pointed as a kind of advocacy of the library and not an objective analysis," said Benjamin Thompson, a former dean of the Harvard Architecture School and a critic of the project.

The Harvard Crimson last week published letters showing the report had been sent to Mr. Smith for revisions before it was released, which had previously been denied by a library corporation spokesman.

Mr. Smith said that he was not certain what changes had been made, but that they were "minimal," and to insure accuracy.

The opponents filed suit in Federal District Court to obtain the original data from which the report was drawn. Judge Frank Murray was studying the consultants' reports to see which could be released.

Last month, representatives from the five neighborhoods surrounding Harvard Square met to form an organization, called Communities Organized to Protect the Environment to oppose the library.

Harvard University's stake in the matter has been the prospect of getting two acres of scarce land on the site from the corporation for a new Kennedy School of Government and its Kennedy Institute of Politics. But the Harvard community was split, too, with a group of law professors writing a letter to President Derek Bok last year opposing the project.

Offers of Aid Pour In

BOSTON, Feb. 11 (AP)—Offers are beginning to pour into the Kennedy Library from communities and institutions eager to accommodate it.

The University of Massachusetts trustees offered sites at the school's Boston and Amherst campuses.