

**MARIEMONT ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
APRIL 19, 2010**

Mr. Koepke called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. Present were Mr. Raeon, Mr. Stegman, Mr. Bruggeman and Mrs. Boone. Building Commissioner Dennis Malone was also present.

The first agenda item was a presentation by representatives of the Mariemont Board of Education of plans for renovating the Mariemont Elementary School, 6750 Wooster Pike. Specific emphasis will be on the façade facing Wooster Pike.

Mr. Paul Imhoff, Superintendent of Mariemont Schools, said the goal is to gain feedback from the ARB Board rather than give a lot of information because details are not firm yet. Assuming the levy is successful they will be looking to renovate the Mariemont Elementary School with a composite approach. They are going to save the entire front portion of the building with the exception of new landscaping and new windows/doors. The goal is to have all the additions match the architectural style of the original portion of the building. They have formed a 30-40 person programming team for the Village which comprises of staff, parents and residents. It is their task to work with the design team on what the inside and the outside of the building will look like. The final decision will rest with the Board of Education. The Board of Education is committed to maintaining a high level of community involvement in the process. They want to make sure that this is a plan and design that the entire Village can be proud of for many decades.

Mr. Jake Thamann, SFAR Architects, explained the very early stages of the site plan to the members of the ARB. He explained that the front elevation will change very little. The windows and doors will change to increase thermal capabilities. It will include additional classrooms and more cafeteria/gymnasium space. They will utilize both West and Plainville for pick up and drop off similar to what is being utilized now. The existing parking lot will remain basically the same as it is now with the exception of an extension to the drop off area to reduce the traffic on West Street as much as possible. The intent is to mimic the Georgian Revival style of the existing building.

Mr. Bruggeman asked if the facades along West and Plainville would be scaled simplified due to preliminary budgets. Mr. Thamann said he does not anticipate any severe duping down of the Georgian style. Mr. Koepke asked if the windows would be operable. Mr. Thamann said yes and they will be made to look like double hung windows.

Mrs. Boones expressed her concern about keeping the green space area at the parking lot and said she wanted to maintain the area with pine trees. Mr. Thamann said the goal is not to have a sea of asphalt and they plan to do a landscape study. They also plan to keep the play field as big as possible but it might end up losing a few feet. Mr. Raeon asked what kind of landscape buffer will be put in along Plainville Road and

Madisonville Road. He anticipates trees along the roads to mitigate the landscaping and reduce headlights from the cars.

Mr. Imhoff said he has asked the design team to look at taking out the unattractive chain link fence in the parking lot and replacing it with more landscaping. The members of ARB agreed unanimously.

Mr. Imhoff said from a parent point of view and safety point of view the number one issue has been the fact that people have a tendency to do what they want to do in spite of what they have been asked to do as far as dropping off students. There is area for improvement.

Mr. Imhoff said when the building was built there was no signage on the front of the building. It was changed to read Plainville High School and then Mariemont High School. There has been some discussion about what to put on the front of the building because it does cause some confusion for people. Members of the ARB did not see an issue with the naming of the building.

Mr. Raeon asked if the general public is permitted to park in the school parking lot after school hours. Mr. Imhoff said yes that is the school's philosophy that the parking lot is a community asset.

Mr. Imhoff said they are in phase right now where things are happening quickly from a design point of view and suggested that they update the members of ARB regularly. They will plan to attend the meeting in May to give an update to keep them in the loop.

The second agenda item was discussion regarding a recommendation to Council concerning designating certain properties on Center Street, East Center Street and West Center Street as "Landmark Structures". The addresses are:

East Center Street: 3724, 3726, 3727, 3731, 3732

West Center Street: 3721, 3722, 3728

Center Street: 3700, 3708, 3709, 3712, 3716, 3717, 3720

Mr. Millard Rogers said this proposal was being submitted by Mariemont Preservation Foundation (MPF). MPF would like to commend all the past and present owners of these properties for the excellent care given to these properties over the years. The area is an enclave of compact gems of architectural integrity in the Village. He referenced Section 151.026 of the Mariemont Zoning Code which states ARB shall be the Historic Preservation Commission. In conjunction with MPF and the Ohio Historic Preservation Office it should conduct a continuing survey of cultural resources in the community. It should also make recommendations for designation of local historic districts, landmarks and historic sites. In conjunction with MPF the ARB shall advise the Village Council regarding the protection of the Village's cultural resources. ARB shall review and approve or deny applications for all Landmark structures. The ordinance is

very definitive on the definition of a landmark. Section 151.075 (a)(f)(h) states any structure, building, site or object which has special character or special historic as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the Village which has been designated as a landmark by the ARB provided however that the term landmark may also include the premises of part thereof. It further more states notes significance of the criteria to be looked at by ARB and Council such as the character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the Village; the embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen. The Tudor revival style in the Village is one of the most definitive obvious commonly seen style in the Village. This style prevailed in the Great Kingdom from 1500-1600 characterized by half timbering of facades, stucco, blending of brick and stone, steeply pitched roofs, leaded windows, gables etc.

In the 1921 plan of John Nolen Center Street was carefully positioned as a central core in the marvelous overlook of the Little Miami River Valley. Looking back up Center Street towards the apartment buildings you get a sense of closure with the median strip in the middle surrounded by handsome houses. As far as the process, Mr. Rogers referenced Section 151.026 and Section 151.075 under (3)(4)(5) review of applications. MPF would like to see these properties listed be included under the landmark designation and protection. It will require that approval would need to be obtained before any changes could be made to the exterior.

Mr. Koepke said under Section 151.075 (5)(h) in his opinion only four of the structures meet significant architectural innovation. Mr. Rogers said one of the important aspects of this area is the combination and enclave. If you remove one element of the enclave then the whole appearance of the enclave is changed. Mr. Koepke asked if a study has been done to determine how this would affect possible future development. The apartment buildings were not part of the original plan. Mr. Rogers said in regards to (h) the significant architectural renovation is the perpetuation of Tudor revival style in the Village. Mr. Koepke said he does not want to limit the potential for future development of the district. He asked if it was required to have landmark status on the buildings in the historic district. Mrs. Boone said she does not think the building should be designated landmark if they do not individually stand as a landmark; but she agrees that they would stand as a district although not necessarily a historic district. She sees it more as an architecture district.

Mr. Bruggeman referred to (i) which he perceives as the only one which applies to a district being historic as opposed to individual properties. He also asked if this would set a precedent by naming a district as opposed to naming specific houses. Mr. Rogers said he could not answer that. Nothing has been added to the original list. Mr. Bruggeman said there has been no weigh in from the owners as to whether or not they want their properties to be restricted by landmark designation. Mr. Rogers said should ARB recommend to Council their recommendation to nominate the area as landmark historic district there would need to be a public hearing. There would then be opportunities to have public opinion and input. Mr. Rogers pointed out that no matter what the area is called Historic Districts, Landmarks and Historic Sites fall under the

jurisdiction of the ARB. Mr. Koepke said he would like to preserve the best of the architecture and the flexibility to maintain a Tudor district but also have the flexibility to allow future development that would accommodate future needs and desires.

Mr. Raeon said right now ARB has no control if someone wanted to tear down a building and what the new buildings would look like. He believes the code is written for the protection of the public. He believes this is an enclave of architectural significance. We should have something in the way of standards that would protect the area in the future.

Mr. Koepke said in his opinion four of the properties (3700, 3798, 3708, 3717 Center Street) are significant architecturally.

Ms. Brenda Allen, 3709 Center Street, said no one on the street is in favor of this. If ARB is going to do anything, she would rather see the apartment buildings put into a historic district but leave the residences alone. Before any decision is made the entire street should be notified.

Discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons of the Historic District in the area. Mr. Stegman said from his own personal experience from living in a Historic District he would recommend it to the property owners for the protection of value for their home. Mrs. Boone suggested that the property owners talk with other residents who live in other Historic Districts within the Village. ARB would make sure if there were any additions that the quality, style and materials match what is already there.

Mr. Allen said for 90 years these \$700,000/\$900,00 homes have been managing all by themselves and this is all new to everyone and homeowners do not understand the implications of such a district. Now that all the lots have construction on them it is like the horse is already out of the barn. The residents have not been romanced the residents on the idea. He believes the efforts of the Board would be better spent elsewhere in the Village.

Ms. Liz Mathews, 3708 Center Street, said one of the implications can mean higher insurance rates. It was shocking to see her house in the Eastern Hills Journal indicating that it might become a Historic Landmark. She suggested taking a lesson from Mr. Inhofe regarding how they have kept everyone informed. Residents want to know if this is going to change how they insure their homes, get loans on their homes or sell their homes.

Mr. Koepke said he agreed and it was well intended but somehow got dropped. No decision will be made tonight as this is a preliminary meeting with more to follow. Mr. Rogers suggested making available to residents what the application process would entail for changes to the exterior of the house.

Mr. Raeon said the residents on Center Street have the values of their homes protected now because of what is there but if a change occurs and the architectural

integrity is compromised the property values will diminish. ARB, Planning Commission and Council jobs are to look at the best interest of the public and to protect the best interest of the public. Right now those types of protection are not in place.

It was recommended by ARB to have Building Commissioner Malone research the issues of insurance and bank loans associated with Historic Districts. Further meeting notices will also be sent to the property owners.

The third agenda item was discussion of potential areas to be included in ARB jurisdiction. Mrs. Boone said she would like to have the apartment buildings on Wooster Pike across from Starbucks added. She also would like to have Mariemont Elementary and Dale Park be land marked in the community as quickly as possible. Both have historic cultural value. Building Commissioner Malone said Dale Park is a landmark structure.

Mr. Raeon said with the talent on the ARB and the professionals that live in the community we should be looking at expanding their scope of oversee. He suggested a Design Review Board be put into place with members of the ARB reviewing plans. His concern is people get stuck in the historic time warp. Jordan Park was done without outside their purview. He does not believe the ARB is as involved as they need to be in the community and would like for them to be more expansive. ARB should be more involved to a greater extent outside of the Historic District. The zoning ordinance is deficient in many ways and we need to take more control. The Design Review Board could act outside of the Historical Districts. The other distinction he would want the group to consider would be commercial issues in addition to residential issues.

Mr. Bruggeman said there are still two lots available for building that could still be reviewed. A code is already in place where people are subjected to certain levels of regulation. He tends to agree with Mr. Raeon. It could be put in place where the Building Commissioner would refer to ARB anything that may not comply with Village standards.

Mrs. Boone said it would be hard to get people on the ARB if everyone had to come before them. The meetings would be extremely long if you had to have everyone who wanted to do something to their house come before the ARB.

Building Commissioner Malone said he did not see the need for a Design Board. He encourages anyone who needs to apply for a permit to come talk with him prior to so all aspects of the work to be performed can be reviewed before people spend money on plans etc.

Mr. Koepke said with the new building guidelines it should also give the Building Commissioner more tools to work with. Building Commissioner Malone agreed.

ARB agreed that the Strand, the surrounding apartment buildings by the Square along Wooster Pike, the doctor's offices should all be part of the Historic District. Mrs. Boone said to see how the process goes and then consider Center Street.

Mr. Stegman said there would have to be a new ordinance to create a new board or a separate board to concentrate on non-historic areas. He believes the whole Village Square area should be in the Historic District.

Mrs. Boone said she agreed with Mr. Stegman but the Village residents as a whole do not want to be regulated.

Mr. Raeon said what concerns him is the potential for re-development. We have been blessed with both Mr. Spinnenweber and Mr. Greiwe who have completed quality projects. But that may not always be the case. He said in the vision plan recommends that the tennis courts be moved which would allow for potential office buildings to add to the tax base. If this goes forward it should be part of ARB's review. Madisonville and Plainville Roads are main corridors. We should be able to review and influence what is built there. Mrs. Boone agreed.

The fourth agenda item was new member orientation processes. Mr. Koepke said every new member should be supplied with maps of the Village, code book, design guidelines, the Residence "D" Ordinance and color charts.

Mr. Raeon said having worked with the public sector for ten years one of the things he has learned is that it is a very good investment to train new members because they do not have a good basis or ability to fall back on information. It is more learning on the job. For his job he has to take continuing education classes every year and he suggested that they have someone come in for a retreat that can help provide training. It would be nice to receive some sort of publications. We have to make investments in the people who are making decisions for the Village. He believes this would result in faster contributions to the Village. He believes training should be given to ARB members, Planning Commission members and Council. Mr. Raeon said their decisions stand. It does not cost the Village anything for their services.

Mr. Koepke said ARB is a materialistic board (responding to the proposed materials of a design and/or a construction) but could benefit from a deeper understanding of the style of community we live in. He suggested it might be helpful to read up on walkable communities and learn the difference between sustainable development (lifestyle development) and using New Urbanism as a commercial or themed architectural gimmick.

Mr. Stegman suggested having a representative from MPF come and give some training sessions. Mr. Raeon said that was an excellent suggestion because MPF is planning on bringing in some good speakers. It would provide good orientation for everyone.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeanne Boone  
Secretary