

**MARIEMONT ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
JUNE 21, 2010**

Mr. Koepke called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Present were Mr. Raeon, Mrs. Boone, Mr. Bruggeman and Mr. Stegman. Building Commissioner Dennis Malone was also present.

Mrs. Boone moved, seconded by Mr. Bruggeman to accept the minutes as written for April 19, 2010.

The first agenda item was continued discussion regarding the recommendation to Council from MPF 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. Koepke explained that ARB's decision is not whether or not this gets put into place but whether or not this matter will be recommended to Council for their deliberation.

Mrs. Allen, 3709 Center Street, said she is not in favor of the idea. She read a letter from Kevin Hassey: 'While we are not in town and able to be present we want it to known that they are not in supportive of our house being included in a designation of a landmark structure'. She said she has spoken to no one on the street that is in favor of this. At the suggestion of ARB from the last meeting she spoke with two people who live in Historic homes and both of them feel it is a detriment. One feels that it is prohibitive of them trying to sell their house. It is a black mark when you try to sell a home. For years our street has been just fine. This all started when the two new houses were built. The community was up in arms and do not want this to happen again. She said if ARB wants to do something with the five apartment buildings that would be fine with her. She is of the belief that Council has more important things to worry about. She asked that ARB leave the homeowners alone.

Mr. Brian Vianello, 3726 East Center Street, said he has not spoken with one person who is in favor of this. He owns multiple properties and would encourage ARB to stay away from any historic designation. It is detrimental to apartment owners. It does make it harder to sell property. He does not see the purpose of it. If it was to be done it should have been done five years ago. The two new houses would look like the rest of the community at this point. By putting a designation on it people will stay away.

Mr. Raeon said his concern is if someone has a slate roof right now and the owner replaces it with shingles there should be some opportunity for ARB to influence that decision through rules and regulations. He is curious as to why everyone thinks this is bad for the Village when we have such a significant amount of property already in historic district or landmark status.

Mr. Vianello said he does not want someone to tell him he would have to put a slate roof on the house as that would cost \$100,000. He also does not want ARB to tell him he has to put a certain type of window in his house. Center Street is one of the prettiest streets in Mariemont and

he does not believe anyone who owns one of those homes is going to do something detrimental. He does not want as a property owner and a tax payer to be told what he has to do. He could understand that concept on a street where everything is identical but nothing on Center Street is identical. He doesn't want the heavy handed government interference.

Mr. Koepke said he believes MPF wants to preserve and promote the Tudor style that exists right now not to dictate any burden upon anyone. The nature of the neighborhood adds a lot of character to the community. MPF feels some responsibility for the character of the community and this would be a way to preserve and keep the architecture in place. He believes the five apartment buildings as a group is important to the area. You do not want people to come in and do whatever they want. It should be viewed as a development strategy.

Mayor Policastro said he agrees with the residents. He put this matter into a Committee of Council and ARB to get their opinion on the apartment buildings not the houses. He believes it is important to designate the apartment buildings because if someone did something to one of those buildings the whole line would be out of place. The houses are fine and asked that they be left alone. He said listening to the people is more important than brick and mortar. He said if the recommendation of ARB is to put the whole area into a historic district he will not refer the matter to Council. He said he sets the agenda for Council and it will have the apartment buildings but it will not include private residences.

Mr. Koepke said he is inclined to agree with the residents as well. He would like for them to continue to maintain the area as they have but he sees no reason to force the Village's will on them but he does believe there should be some designation for the apartment buildings.

Mr. Raeon said when looking at the zoning code it talks about the best interest of the community not individuals. We are listening to people who are concerned about this designation but in reality we do not know what the ramifications will be. The street has a lot of historic significance for the community. We are trying to make sure that there would be no deviations in the architectural style. There is a risk if we do not have something on the books. The community has a history of reacting to something that happens as opposed to being proactive. It is important to have the framework in mind.

Mr. Koepke said when there are no rules anything can go. Mrs. Allen said perhaps the rules should apply to new construction only.

Mr. Bruggeman said if this restriction was in place when the two new homes were constructed they would not have been built in that manner. He said he agreed with Mr. Raeon. The controls that the ARB would put on would only be on the exterior facade.

Mrs. Allen said when talking with the two homeowners in the Historic District they described it as a nightmare. In addition, should changes need to be made she would have to pay a professional to attend the meetings.

Mrs. Boone said it is a moot point if the Mayor is not going to make the recommendation to Council.

Mr. Stegman said we are a Board and it is our job to look for the best welfare of the community. Mr. Bruggeman said this is not a political decision but rather an architectural decision.

Mayor Policastro said there are a lot of people upset about this. You do not put this on the agenda without going to the people who own the houses and let them know what ARB is trying to do.

Mr. Raeon said what the Mayor decides to do at Council is up to him but what ARB decides to do it a different matter. ARB should take a vote to see whether or not to include the houses. He does not think the Mayor should tell ARB what they can and cannot do. Mayor Policastro said they should not tell him what to do. Mrs. Boones suggested voting on the issue separately.

Mr. Vianello said he appreciates what ARB is trying to do with the apartments but a lot of them need new windows and the landlords are losing money as it is. It would be detrimental to make them historic. People will walk away from they leaving the door open for Section 8 housing and foreclosures.

Mr. Raeon said residents in the Historic District have been doing things in accordance with ARB requirements. It may cost a little more but they have been very understanding.

Mr. Koepke said the area may be a development district but he does not see it as a historic district. Mr. Bruggeman said the definition per Section 151.075(C) says a Historic District is an area so delineated on the Mariemont Zoning Map which contains one or more landmark structures. Mr. Koepke said if at some point the residents want this protection then let the request come from them.

Mr. Raeon said from his standpoint he would like to see the landmark status that included both the homes and the apartment buildings. If he had assurance from the ARB and the Building Commissioner that we look at creating some standards he would back off of the landmark status but right now we do not have anything to protect the area. He would be happy to work with both the Planning Commission and the Planning and Zoning Committee to put something together that would be agreeable to the property owners. He will not leave the meeting this evening with this matter being left to a decision at a later time.

Mr. Bruggeman said the Zoning Code calls for ARB to make recommendations for designation of historic districts. It also has language that allows 51% of the property owners to initiate designation. He suggested having an informal discussion with everyone and encouraged all to be involved.

Mrs. Boone said she does not believe this is within the jurisdiction of ARB.

Mr. Stegman said when he had to come before the ARB to do renovations to his house he found the Board to be very accommodating. He is in favor of the district and adding the apartments in the district as well. He feels it would be good for the Board to be on record in favor of this as being good for the community.

Mr. Raeon moved, seconded by Mr. Stegmanto send a recommendation to Council to adopt a historic district for homes on Center Street, East Center Street, West Center Street, as proposed by MPF. On roll call three ayes, two nays (Mrs. Boone and Mr. Koepke dissenting).

The second request was for a Certificate of Appropriateness from Terrence Chin, 8534 E Kemper Road, Cincinnati, OH 45249 to install metal caps on top of stone parapet caps at 3904

Oak Street, Mariemont, OH 45227. The purpose of the metal caps is to preserve and protect the building from further deterioration.

Mr. Chin said the plaster is leaking and they are having a hard time just maintaining the property from further deterioration.

After discussion it was determined by ARB members that they wanted to see more details of how it would look and pictures of those metal caps already in place. He would like to see how is proposing to make the changes and an architectural drawing specifying the details. Examples of the craft would also be helpful. They want to preserve the architecture as much as possible. Mr. Koepke suggested tabling the matter until the sampling and details can be submitted. He said Building Commissioner Malone would be able to help guiding him on what is needed.

The third agenda item was a second presentation by representatives of the Mariemont Board of Education of final plans for renovating the Mariemont Elementary School, 6750 Wooster Pike, Mariemont, OH 45227.

Mr. Paul Imhoff, Superintendent for Mariemont City Schools introduced Lisa Gulley from SFA Architects, to help give ARB an update on the progression of the Elementary School renovation. They have had numerous meetings with residents, staff, Dennis Malone, Mayor Policastro and Chief Hines. He reviewed the site plan and said they are almost at the end of the schematic design phase. He pointed out where the modular classrooms will be placed, the parent drop-off and the school bus drop-off, gated hard surface play area and additional parking by the Board of Education entrance. They are working on the survey and they anticipate some regarding will need to be done.

Mr. Kopek asked if any utilities that need to be brought in for the temporary classrooms will be removed. Mr. Imhoff said yes and the plan is to put everything back better than it is now.

Mr. Imhoff said a lot of time has been spent on the traffic issues and they are going to have a professional traffic study done. Mr. Stegman questioned the parking by the Board of Education entrance. Mr. Imhoff said it was not only for staff but also for guests. It will not be convenient parking for the entrance to the school. In short ARB members would like to see more detail and landscaping when it comes to parking. One thing they have learned is that parents want to drop their children off at the door. If that is not provided, parents will make up their own drop off space. Mr. Imhoff said they are in communication with the Parish Center but as of yet nothing has been agreed upon.

Mr. Imhoff said the inside of the building will consist of four different levels but from the street view it will still only be two. The back of the building will be considered the field level. The parents will drop their kids off under a covered area and the children can go directly into the cafeteria to congregate. The next level is the lower level of the school which will also be the main entrance off of West Street. This will floor the gym, media center, offices, classrooms, and a small courtroom. One concern they are planning for is room for expansion. They will have some extra classrooms for this very reason. There will be 570 students with it being the largest in the district. They are planning to be ready for more kids once the renovation is complete.

The third level will be even with Wooster Pike. It will contain classrooms, the entrance to the auditorium and art rooms. It will also house the Board of Education which will be separate from the rest of the building. You will not be able to access the school from the Board offices

without a key. They are planning to leave as much of the original components of the auditorium in place as possible.

The second floor of the main building consists of small group spaces in between every two classrooms. It gives students who are ahead of everyone or those who are behind space where they can be instructed in private as opposed to being in the hallway.

Mr. Imhoff pointed out the West Street elevation and pointed out that it is still being worked out. They are hoping to do something more decorative than the concrete. They are hoping to maintain the similar roof structure and incorporating elements. They are also going to maintain the same window rhythm. The windows will be replaced to make them more efficient.

Mr. Koepke said he appreciated the opportunity to see the plans but he did have some concern with the roof being so long and straight and wondered if it should articulate itself different from the old building so there is some rhythm to the roof. Mr. Imhoff said they are trying to make it intuitive as to where to enter the building and to draw the eye as to where you go in. Mrs. Boone said it would be helpful to have the word 'entrance' carved in stone. Mr. Koepke said the architecture should clearly inform the visitor of the building entrance. Mr. Bruggeman said the front of the building is not excessively creative.

Mr. Imhoff asked if generally speaking if they are on the right track this early in the design process. ARB agreed that yes they are going in the right direction and find the plans very satisfactory. Mr. Raeon said the building does not have much landscape appeal from the street. The building is so massive that it will really need some landscaping. Mr. Imhoff said the building will actually be smaller but it will not look smaller. They plan to do more landscaping with the front of the building.

Mr. Imhoff said they would like to keep coming back for the next several months to keep ARB informed because this is the time when changes may occur. The goal is to make it look like the building has always been here.

Mr. Raeon said he values that kids can walk to school but too many parents drive them to school. Mr. Imhoff said they are applying for a grant called Safe Routes to School which will help us make the community more walk able such as lighted crosswalks etc. Mr. Raeon said when talking with the 4<sup>th</sup> graders about the vision plan was the tunnels underneath Plainville Road at one time so the kids living in the Historic District could get to the school. Perhaps that is something the grant money could be used for and it would eliminate the need for crossing guards. Mr. Imhoff said he was not aware of them and would check with Millard Rogers.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeanne Boone  
Secretary