

**MARIEMONT ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 24, 2019**

Mayor Policastro called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Present were Ms. Stalzer, Ms. Schwartz, Mr. Kintner, Mr. Bentley and Mr. Wren. Mr. Lockhart arrived at 5:25 p.m. Also in attendance was the Building Administrator Don Keyes.

Ms. Schwartz moved, seconded by Ms. Stalzer to approve the minutes as written for August 21, 2019. On roll call; seven ayes, no nays.

The first application from Mark & Jenna Reardon, 3 Linden Place, Mariemont, OH to permanently remove improperly designed window boxes then replace and repaint siding as well as shutters and house trim. Color of the house siding is to be changed from its current green to white, shutters are currently black and would be painted dark blue and the front door; currently black, would be painted a light green.

The removal of the window boxes and changes to the Landmark house colors are reviewed in Mariemont code 151.075 (C) and (H).

*Findings of the Building Department Administrator:*

This house is one of the Colonial Farmhouse Cottages, designed by the Elzner Anderson Group, on Linden Place. The description of the houses is on the Village color sheet, page 16. The colors being proposed are not on the color sheet nor are the colors that are currently on the house. If these new colors are approved, they will be added to the color sheet with ARB meeting date and any other particulars that are added in an attempt to bring the color sheets up to date.

The window boxes may have been an original design feature of the house, however, that has not been confirmed. Window boxes have been added to other houses within this area of the Village. As you can see from the pictures, the window box installed on the later (2003) addition to the house (on the right) is not installed in the same location as the others, but is lower than the window sill.

Mayor Policastro suggested the first item to discuss be the window boxes. Mr. Keyes said it is not clear that the boxes were part of the original design.

Mr. Reardon said the window boxes are incorrectly installed and are damaging the siding to the home. The window boxes are cut through the aluminum siding and it ended up rotting out the wood behind it. Taking out the window boxes in turn creates the need to paint the house. Window boxes are only located on the second floor of the house. In the cul-de-sac they live on there are no window boxes. He does not believe they are original to the house.

Mrs. Schwartz said she believes most window boxes in the Historic District have been added and are not original.

Mayor Policastro moved, seconded by Mr. Kintner to allow the applicant to remove the window boxes without having to put them back up. On roll call; seven ayes, no nays.

Mr. Reardon explained the reason for changing the house siding from the current green color to white. They wanted to find a lighter color because it would last longer and they wanted a

light color with dark shutters. They wanted something different for the front door to set the house apart. The colors they chose they felt would fit within the historical context of the neighborhood and increase of the value of their property along with the property values of their neighbors. They also felt the colors they chose would fit in with the color chart provided. They are different but they are traditional and conservative. He feels they will blend with the other colors. They picked Decorator's White for the siding. The shutters would be a blue (he provided a color sample) which appears black. The front door would be a Nottingham Green which is a traditional light green. He passed around a color sample of the Decorator's White for the members of the ARB to view. The blend of colors they picked are traditional and not trendy. Many homes in Mariemont have these color blends.

Ms. Schwartz said she thought there were only certain colors that could go on this particular cul-de-sac. Mr. Keyes said the colors that were designed by the original architect are on this sheet. Members of the ARB discussed and reviewed the different color sheets provided by Mr. Keyes. Mr. Reardon said there are several homes nearby that are white. Ms. Schwartz said she is not sure that those were approved.

Mr. Bill Brown, 4030 Lytle Woods Drive, said he is a member of Council and also the Chairman of the Planning Commission. Mr. Reardon has come before ARB wishing to paint his house with an unapproved color and a color that is not in the designated chart. The applicant is asking for a variance for what is designated. ARB calls that a Certificate of Appropriateness. He is asking ARB to consider the Village Code Book and the point and purpose behind having a Historic District. This house has landmark designation. It was a contributing property to the Village's designation of National Historic Landmark status. He is fearful that the Village is allowing too much change. It is argued that they are little changes and what is the harm? But a little adds up over time – it is death by a thousand cuts. At some point we will not have a recognizable Historic District. The Code Book Section 151.025(B) states that the ARB shall be the Historic Preservation Commission of the municipality and its duty and obligation is to preserve the architectural design. What ARB is charged with is preserving the architect's original design and specifications. When an applicant comes before the Planning Commission and asks for a variance we have to cite relative to the code book the reasons for the variance to be granted. Specifically specified in the code are reasons with one of the main reasons being that it will present a hardship upon the applicant to deny the variance. He does not believe in this instance – asking the applicant to choose an approved color will provide a hardship. There are three colors to pick from for the siding, three colors for the trim and three colors to pick from for the shutters. The applicant is not limited by choice. The applicant has raised the argument that there are other white houses by him and he is right.

Mr. Reardon said the houses are painted colors that are not on the approved list. His understanding from talking with Mr. Keyes was if he wanted to paint the house the same colors that are on it he would not need to come before ARB. Mr. Keyes said if he told Mr. Reardon that it was in error. In the past if someone is not changing the color of the property they did not have to go through an approval process presuming that the current color is correct. They would still have to obtain a permit to do it if it was an historic property. Mr. Reardon would still need to get approval to change the color from an unapproved color to an approved color.

Mr. Brown said there are other white houses that sit in the block and he is saying that they were probably painted white in error and are not in compliance with the current code. He does not know how the error was made or when it occurred. Let's not justify a future mistake based on a past mistake. We have an opportunity here right now to slowly remedy these mistakes. Eventually the white houses that are there now will wish to be repainted. When they

happens they will need to come before ARB to get permission or go to the Building Commissioner to ask for the approved colors. Ultimately the house will be brought back into what was originally intended by the designing planners and architects. We need to ask if we want to maintain a Historic District.

Ms. Schwartz pointed out that there are three members of the ARB that have historic homes and they too have to abide by the rules of the Code Book. Ms. Stalzer said she has lived on Sheldon Close and Albert Place and believes we need to stick with the approved colors.

Mr. Kintner said Mr. Brown makes a good point. He believes over the years the ARB has become a bit wishy washy and let people go against rules because the next door neighbor was allowed to do something. Mayor Policastro said he does not remember allowing it just because they said a neighbor was allowed. Mr. Kintner said he would have to go through the minutes but has raised this issue before.

Mr. Wren said he would assume that Mr. Reardon would pick the colors from the same color combinations.

Mr. Joe Stoner, 6924 Miami Bluff Drive and President of Mariemont Preservation Foundation said they have a vested interest in preserving the character of the Village with the Historic District in particular. He is pleased to see the process in place and the applicant agreeing to go with the approved pallet of colors.

Mr. Kintner moved, seconded by Mr. Wren to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness provided the applicant follows the approved prescribed color pallet and presents to the Building Commissioner for a permit. On roll call; seven ayes, no nays.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ms. Mary Ann Schwartz  
Secretary