

MARIEMONT PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING HELD AUGUST 24, 2016

The Mariemont Planning Commission met on Wednesday, August 24, 2016. Mayor Policastro called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM for the purpose of reviewing and discussing the request of Richard Greiwe for the proposed condominium project on Miami Road and the request from Kevin and Melissa Taylor to increase the height of their garage. Present were Planning Commission members Ms. Reed, Mr. Vianello, and Mr. Wolter. Also present were Building Administrator Don Keyes, Council Members Maggie Palazzolo and Bill Brown, applicant Mr. Greiwe, project architect Sary Lehtinen, and landscape architect Martin Koepke. Mayor Policastro excused the absence of Mrs. Garber.

Building Administrator Don Keyes stated that there had been a request from Keven and Melissa Taylor of 6710 Mariemont Avenue for the variance in the height of their garage. However, they had informed Mr. Keyes earlier in the day that, after further consideration, they had decided to withdraw their request.

Therefore, the only request was from Mr. Greiwe regarding the properties at 3814 to 3818 Miami Road. The properties would be razed and replaced with a multiple unit condominium complex. As part of the change, the Zoning of the properties must change from Residence B to Residence D to allow the multiple unit condominiums to be built and allow the setbacks for the properties to change.

Finding of the Building Commissioner: The process for changing the Mariemont Zoning Code has been established in Ordinance 0-20-13, dated October 14, 2013, where the properties on Madisonville Road and Murray Avenue were converted from Residence B to Residence D. The decision by the Planning Commission will be placed before Village Council to establish the new zoning. The current plan for the building follows all code requirements for Residence D.

Mr. Greiwe said he has enjoyed developing condominium projects in the Village since 2007, when he first showed the renderings of what became Jordan Park. Over the past few years, Greiwe Development has developed 104 condos here and they have added not only beauty to the Village, but also a new housing type. People today often want to age in place and Mariemont is a good place to do that with all the amenities that are within walking distance. The projects he has built also allow for that. They are flats with elevators so people do not have to worry about stairs. The projects he has built have brought a lot of new residents to Mariemont and have helped to retain some existing residents who find this type of housing very attractive. Tonight he is here to discuss his newest venture. While his other projects have been a Tudor revival design, this one would be an English Cottage design, because this is a different location and a special location and they want to respect that. The team for this project is the same as the other buildings, with Sary Lehtinen being the building architect and Martin Koepke being the landscape architect. He knows they will give the same attention to detail on this project as they have on the others. Mr. Greiwe said that the current projects only nets about \$35,000 per year to the Village due to the abatement, but he spoke with the Mariemont School Board Treasurer who said the three projects that are completed are generating \$570,000 per year to the schools. When the tax abatements expire, that amount will increase to approximately \$1,000,000 per year. With the completion of Livingood

Condominiums in December and the proposed project across from Albert Place, the total amount going to the school should be about \$1,300,000 per year. These projects do bring customers and residents into the Village, so they are an asset to the merchants, the schools, and the Village.

Sary Lehtinen of Glaserworks is the chief architect on the proposed project. Ms. Lehtinen gave a slide show presentation that illustrated the property lines of the new project, as well as the setbacks, and renderings of the front and side elevations of the building. She said that the project had been approved by the Architectural Review Board. Tonight's meeting was to discuss the details of the Residence D zoning. The site of the building is on Miami Road on the corner of West Street, directly across from Albert Place. She feels the vision of Mary Emery and the plans of John Nolen have created a lot of great spaces in Mariemont and is what lends to the community's charm, but there were parts of John Nolen's plan that were never built. The projects that Greiwe Development have done in Mariemont were designed to fit into John Nolen's plan for a more small town urban Mariemont. Jordan Park, Emery Park, Nolen Park, Livingood Park, and the proposed project on Miami Road are part of the original John Nolen core. She showed photos of Jordan Park and stated that the style of the proposed building would be different, but it would have some of the same components as Jordan Park. The new project would fit the requirements of Residence D zoning just as Jordan Park does in the terms of setbacks and building heights. Ms. Lehtinen explained that the setback on Miami Road is ten feet from the property line to the part of the building that extends out the farthest. There are parts of the building that are recessed and the setback in those areas of the building is 19 feet. She showed the proposed site plan and how it would be situated along Miami Road, West Street, and Lane O. The setbacks would be the same as those at Jordan Park, Emery Park, Nolen Park, and Livingood Park. The setbacks on West Street would range from 10 feet to 22 feet. The rear yard setback is measured from the center of the lane (alley) and zoning requires a setback of 30 feet for the building and 25 feet for the balconies. She said all parking would be located underground, with two spaces for each unit plus four additional guest spaces, with the entrance to the garage being on Lane O. Ms. Lehtinen went on to explain that they had lowered the elevation of the building to limit the height of it as much as possible. It was necessary to have three floors in order to make the numbers work from an investment perspective.

Mr. Greiwe explained that the homes on Albert Place were the inspiration for the design of this project. They would be using a off-white brick, roof timbers, and steep sloping roofs just like the homes on Albert Place. He said he could not use a pure white brick and try to match Albert Place because there are too many variations in the color white. He also wanted to point out that all the developments he has done in the Village replaced apartment buildings that were run down and had not been maintained. That is why he sees this as a "value proposition".

Mayor Policastro said he would like to see a sidewalk put in along West Street between the curb and the south side of the proposed building that would lead from Miami Road to Lane O.

Margery Mattox of 3820 Miami Road said her apartment building is right next door to the new building and asked what would be done to protect the privacy. Ms. Lehtinen said the windows of the new building are situated so that they orient more toward the street than to the neighboring buildings. Ms. Mattox asked if having the garage entrance on Lane O might cause traffic congestion there considering all the apartment buildings that also use Lane O to enter and exit their

garages. Mr. Greiwe explained that there were a total of 12 units in the buildings that are being torn down. The new building will have 18 units, so they are actually only adding the traffic from six new units to the amount of traffic using the lanes. Betsy Bruce of 3942 Miami Road, #303, said she lives at Jordan Park. That building also shares a lane with several apartment buildings and they have never had any difficulty getting in or out of the garage. Traffic there has never been a problem.

Sally Coffman of 4 Albert Place said she is concerned about the height of the building and the ten-foot setback. She feels it will hover over the homes on Albert Place. The other condominiums may have the same setback, but they have open spaces or parks across from them so they don't seem so imposing. She wondered if the building could possibly be moved back. Ms. Lehtinen said the building could not be moved back without violating the rear yard setback requirements of Residence D zoning.

Jenny Ferguson of 3810 Miami Road said she welcomes the idea Mr. Greiwe is proposing. She appreciated the fact that he had been willing to meet with her and other neighbors to show them the plans and explain the project to them. The projects he has done so far have been well-constructed and blend in with the surrounding architecture. She welcomes the idea of adding more owner-occupied dwellings to the area and thought that it might reduce the number of cars that park on the street now. She feels Mr. Greiwe's projects have caused property values to improve and they are very appealing.

Fran Turner of 10 Albert Place said the design is very attractive. However, she also feels the building is so massive it would overwhelm the houses on Albert Place. She said if there could be more of a setback and have some trees in front to mask it, it would be better. She also questioned if the building should be named Albert Park. She thinks it would be confused with Albert Place and it would not be appropriate to use Mary Emery's son's name there.

Mr. Greiwe said he is open to changing the name. Mayor Policastro suggested that they name it after the Village's sister city in England, which is Hampstead Gardens.

Kevin Hassey of 3717 Center Street said he is in favor of the project. He said we need to think in terms of the alternative. One of the buildings this project would replace was empty, with no utilities. He thinks the Village is lucky to have Mr. Greiwe who can change that in a quality way.

Dave Boyles of 6709 Mariemont Avenue said he had several concerns. First he wanted to know if the building could be moved farther back from Miami Road. He hoped that some of the older trees could be saved. He was also worried about the hazardous materials that would be put out in the air when the buildings are torn down, such as lead paint. He wanted to know if there would be lead-based paint abatement. He also wanted to know how they would minimize the dust that would be created from cutting the stone for the building. Additionally, he was concerned about the noise from the construction and the light pollution from the building's exterior lighting.

Mr. Greiwe addressed each of those concerns. He has already had the buildings inspected for lead paint and asbestos. They did find some asbestos-wrapped pipes that will be removed by

a certified technician before demolition begins. That is a requirement of the building code, so there will be no hazardous material released during demolition. The building will be constructed of fired brick and it will be delivered already cut to size, as will the concrete parts of the building. They may have to trim some of the bricks to fit, but it would be minimal. The noise from the construction would be limited to the hours allowed by the Village and that would be included in the construction agreement between him and the Village. The exterior landscaping lights will be low lighting. The lights from inside the building will be warm rather than bright or stark. He is willing to eliminate or limit the number of exterior lights.

Martin Koepke, the landscape architect for the project, said some trees will have to come down, but they would keep whatever trees they could. He referred to photo of Albert Place from when those homes were first built and showed that there were no trees there in the beginning. It is their intention to add trees to the landscaping and some of the trees there will stay, if possible. They are going to try to save the evergreens in the back and hope that the construction will not damage the roots too much. Anything that is not on the project's property will stay, of course. He asked people to look at the landscaping at Emery Park and Nolen Park. It shows how you can use landscaping to create visual activity that seems to reduce the scale of the building.

Tim Biggs of 3605 Center Street said he works in commercial real estate. It is his experience that not many property developers offer the kind of quality that Mr. Greiwe does. These types of projects help to reduce the number of absentee landlords. Homeowners have a vested interest in maintaining their properties. He asked if most of the residents of the condos are retirees. Mr. Greiwe said there is a mix of residents. Some of them are families that came from an urban environment and just prefer apartment-style living. Some are single professionals who appreciate not having to do yard or exterior maintenance. Some are baby boomers and retirees who want to age in place.

Mr. Greiwe said, if the project is approved, demolition would start in the early part of 2017 and the construction would take about a year. While construction is going on, the construction site will be fenced in. The roads will be kept clean of dirt and mud. He will follow the requirements of containing mud from any run-off and will do his best to be a good neighbor. He will be mindful of the children going to and from school and will have his workers park on Wooster Pike so they don't take up the parking spaces on Miami Road, West Street, or Albert Place.

When asked what price point of the units would be, he said they would range from \$650,000 to \$1,200,000.

John Scholtz of 3731 West Street said that from the first time he saw Jordan Park and Emery Park, he wished for a project like that on Miami Road. He has traveled to Kensington, England, quite often in his job and many of the buildings there resemble this proposed project, so he thinks this would be a good fit here in a community that was styled after an English community.

Chris Tegtmeyer of 3598 Flintpoint Way said she is also in favor of the project. It shows from forward change in the Village and will only add to our tax base, which is very appealing.

Ray Sabo of 3712 Pocahontas Avenue said he is also in favor of the project. He has lived here his entire life and thinks it would be a great addition to the Village. He asked if Mr. Greiwe could get a variance that would allow him to add five feet to the setback from Miami Road. Mayor Policastro said that there is nothing behind the building and asked if the variance would allow the building to be moved back five feet. He saw no reason why that couldn't be done.

Ms. Lehtinen said they could move the building back five feet from Miami Road if they were given a variance to reduce the required setback on the rear of the building.

Mr. Vianello asked if the rear yard variance would result in a 15-foot setback and Ms. Lehtinen said it would. Mayor Policastro said the Planning Commission has the authority to grant that variance.

After further discussion and input from residents, it was decided that granting the variance would help to alleviate a lot of the concerns and make the project more appropriate for the area.

Therefore, Mr. Vianello moved, seconded by Mr. Wolter, to change the zoning from Residence B to Residence D and to grant the variance on the rear yard setback necessary to allow for a 15-foot setback on the Miami Road side of the building. On roll call: four ayes, no nays.

Mayor Policastro called for a vote to accept the minutes of the Planning Commission meeting of July 19, 2016. On roll call: four ayes, no nays. The minutes as prepared by the stenographer were accepted.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mr. Jerry Vianello, Secretary