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# Manhattan / Riley County Preservation Alliance Newsletter

April, 2001

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## THE “SLUMS” OF SOUTH MANHATTAN What Some Call “Blight,” We Call “Home Sweet Home”



803 Pierre  
David & Karen Seay’s house,  
a “gingerbread” beauty.



1031 Pierre  
James and Maranda Wilson rent the basement  
apartment of this small attractive home.



825 Pierre  
The Amy and Frank Gatschet home. Built in 1910  
by the West family who ran the “inter-urban”  
streetcar line from here to Junction City.



1009 Pierre  
Steve and Wesa Brantl have been remodeling and  
are justifiably proud of their efforts. Below, Steve  
and his son, Josh, take a well-deserved break.



221 S. 8th St.  
Richard and Barb Gehring’s old stone treasure



**NOTES FROM THE  
M/RCPA MEETING OF MARCH 8, 2001**

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Thanks to Paula Ellis for taking such complete notes.

Our guest speakers at the March 8 meeting were Okert Fourie and Cam Moeller, from the Planning Department at Manhattan City Hall. We were joined by members of the South Side Neighborhood Association, as well as other interested citizens, approximately 40 in all.

The meeting focused on a review of the “Design Guidelines and Standards—Residential Development” Draft dated December 5, 2000 (see last issue), and to discuss more specifically the so-called “super duplex” problem that afflicts the south Manhattan area.

While in general the guidelines were warmly received, the following notes summarize concerns expressed by the audience, many of whom felt the guidelines did not go far enough:

**Landscaping, Home Design, and Lot Coverage**

- It was felt that landscaping criteria should be built into the guidelines.
- Dismay was expressed that trees on city property are being cut down with no regard for green space or neighborhood appearance.
- A Heritage Tree Program was suggested, to save old growth trees.
- It was felt that sidewalks and parking should be included in the lot coverage requirements. It was recognized that there is a difference between residential and commercial needs, and it was felt that difference should be noted.
- The mass of the new structures was criticized.
- It was felt that standards should be drawn for window spacing around the whole house—not just the front side.

**Parking**

- It was felt that curb cut-outs—the breaking of curbs for parking purposes—destroy the residential appearance, and that this should be addressed in the guidelines. These cement “driveways” are seen as nothing more than parking lots.
- The use of gravel in parking areas was also of concern.

**Neighborhood Integrity and KSU**

- There was great concern that families are moving away from our older neighborhoods, thereby changing their very character.
- Concern was also expressed that overall planning in Manhattan has been largely ignored, as noted by the appearance of “student gettos” throughout the city.
- There was a call for an ordinance to limit to three unrelated people who live in a home.
- Often there are too many cars parked in one location, indicating a larger number of residents than zoning allows.
- It was felt there was a need to put pressure on KSU perhaps to prohibit cars for freshmen and sophomores, and to require students to live on campus for the first two years. KSU, it was noted, has not built any new housing for its students since the 1960s. Dormitories should be upgraded, and housing built for married students closer to campus.
- Concern was expressed for students living in some housing that is not safe.
- There were questions about how inspections are done, i.e., what are the expectations and how is enforcement accomplished?

**Procedure and Enforcement**

- Questions arose as to how and when the standards would be adopted, and how they could be enforced.
- It was felt that zoning standards also needed to be reviewed, updated, and also enforced.
- There was a call for specific guidelines with strict enforcement if new construction does not meet specific criteria: if curbing is cut; if trees on city property are cut down; if too many people are occupying the property, etc.

**Conditional Use and Zoning**

- The first step seemed to be an immediate request for a Conditional Use Amendment.
- Down Zoning to R-1 may be called for in affected areas of town.

Our speakers suggested that concerned citizens should contact Planning Boards members and the city Commissioners. Many did, and the result follows.

## FOLLOW-UP TO THIS AND RELATED MEETINGS

Since our meeting with the planning staff, action concerning duplexes has been swift. Wording for a conditional use permit was presented to the Manhattan Urban Area Planning Board by city staff at their meeting on Monday, April 2. Many people, including builders, spoke before the Board, with the following result:

A conditional use permit was adopted for certain types of duplexes being built in areas zoned R-2 and R-M. Jerry Reynard, Mike Toy, Tom Phillips and Gwyn Riffel supported the motion. Mike Hill and Mike Kratochvil opposed.

Eric Cattell of the staff forwarded the proposed text which will be presented to City Commission at their next meeting, April 17. Pertinent passages have been excerpted. If anyone is interested in reading the full text, your editor has it (776-4862):

### **4-104. R-2. Two-Family Residential District.**

The R-2, Two-Family Residential District is designed to provide a dwelling zone at a density no greater than two (2) attached dwelling units per 7,500 square feet.

(A) Permitted Uses. ...

(5) Single-family attached dwellings, provided that there be no more than two dwelling units per structure, **and provided that such dwellings are not conditional uses pursuant to (B) (3).**

(6) Single-family detached dwellings.

(7) Two-family dwellings, **provided that such dwellings are not conditional uses pursuant to (B) (3).**

(B) Conditional Uses.

...

**(3) Single-family attached dwellings, provided that there be no more than two dwelling units per structure, and Two-family dwellings. In either case, these uses are only Conditional, and not Permitted, if the structure has two or more habitable stories partially or entirely above ground level and if the use meets any two (2) of the following criteria:**

**(a) One or both dwelling units in the structure have no attached garage.**

**(b) The principal structure is greater than or equal to 30 % lot coverage.**

**(c) Off-street parking is proposed both in front of, and behind the structure.**

**(d) The entire structure containing both dwelling units is on one lot.**

...

(C) Lot Size Requirements.

(1) Minimum lot area:

(a) Single-family detached dwellings: 6,000

square feet in area.

(b) Single-family attached dwellings **including those listed in (B) (3):** 3,750 square feet per dwelling unit in area.

(c) Two-family dwellings **including those listed in (B)(3):** 7,500 square feet in area.

(d) All other permitted and conditional uses: 10,000 square feet in area.

(2) Minimum lot width:

(a) Single-family detached dwellings: Fifty (50) feet.

(b) Single-family attached **including those listed in (B)(3):** Twenty-five (25) feet.

(c) Two-family dwellings **including those listed in (B)(3):** Fifty (50) feet.

(d) All other permitted and conditional uses: Sixty (60) feet.

(3) Minimum lot depth: 100 feet.

(D) Bulk Regulations.

(1) Maximum structure height: Forty (40) feet.

(2) Yard requirements:

(a) Minimum front yard: Twenty-five (25) feet on all sides abutting a street.

(b) Minimum side yard:

(1) Single-family detached and two-family dwellings: Six (6) feet on each side of the zoning lot.

(2) Single-family attached: Six (6) feet, except there shall be no required side yard for the principal structure on side lot lines along which dwelling units are attached.

(3) All other permitted and conditional uses: Fifteen (15) feet on each side of the zoning lot.

(c) Minimum rear yard: Twenty-five (25) feet.

(3) Maximum lot coverage: Thirty-five (35) percent.

(E) Use Limitations.

(1) All single-family attached dwelling units, whether developed as permitted uses or as conversions of two-family dwellings, shall have covenants or restrictions which run with the land upon which the units are located.

...

The following Section 4-105 relating to R-M. Four-Family Residential Districts, has similar wording in regard to single-family attached dwellings.

Many members of the South Side Neighborhood Association, the Neighborhood Coalition and the Preservation Alliance will be attending the upcoming Commission meeting concerning these changes to the Code. All who are interested in preserving the integrity of these threatened areas of Manhattan are invited to participate as well. Only in numbers will our voices be heard.



**MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE, INC.**

**Next Meeting:**

**Thursday, April 12**, 7:30 p.m., First Congregational Church, Juliette and Poyntz, Manhattan, KS. Following the meeting we will visit the home of Bill and Donna Schenk-Hamlin, 1922 Leavenworth, which is the first house in Manhattan to be designated an “historic home.”

**Riley County Historical Society Quarterly Meeting:**

**Thursday, April 26**, 6:30 p.m. for dinner (\$10.00 call 565-6490 for dinner reservations by Wednesday, April 18), or 7:30 p.m. for the free program (no RSVP necessary in that case). The meeting will be held at the Leonardville Methodist Church. The speaker is Larry Rutter, who will speak about stone enclosures in Kansas. He recently retired from the Kansas State Historical Society after nearly 19 years of service. He worked in the Historic Sites Division and has had much experience with the maintenance of history structures, including the Goodnow house. He was a consultant in rebuilding the stone wall by the Museum and Goodnow House last year.

**Upcoming Tours (Members Only):**

**April:** Bill and Donna Schenk-Hamlin’s historic early-twentieth century home at 1922 Leavenworth.

**May:** Marolyn Caldwell’s unusual but charming late-40s masonry and brick home located at 1115 Colorado (wine and cheese included).

Other surprises down the road.

If anyone has news to put in future M/RCPA newsletters, please contact the Editor, Marolyn Caldwell, at 776-4862, or email [marolync@flinthills.com](mailto:marolync@flinthills.com).

**NEXT MEETING: APRIL 12, 7:30 PM**

**MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION FOR MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE, INC.**

Dues date from the Annual Meeting in September. Dues paid mid-year confer membership status until the next Annual Meeting. Dues are \$15 for an individual and \$20 for a family. Checks should be made out to the Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance, Inc. c/o P.O. Box 1893, Manhattan, Kansas 66505. Questions? Call Linda Glasgow at 785-565-6490.

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