



MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

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County Commission Votes to Demolish Church

Written by Kathy Dzewaltowski

During the May 10th Riley County Commission meeting, commissioners voted 2-1 to seek bids to demolish the former First Christian Church building located at Fifth and Humboldt Streets. Commissioners John Ford and Greg McKinley voted in support of the motion, and Commissioner Kathryn Focke voted against it. The meeting's agenda had not indicated a vote about the church was scheduled to take place.

The First Christian Church congregation built a new church building, which opened in 2019, and the previous Riley County Commission purchased the old church sight unseen for \$852,000 in May 2020. Commissioner Ford voted against purchasing the church, and former Commissioners Marvin Rodriguez and Ron Wells approved the purchase. The building's location near the Riley County Courthouse and other county offices made it a desirable property to acquire.

At the time of the purchase, Commissioner Wells indicated the county desired to acquire the land where the church is located and indicated the building could possibly be demolished in the future if it were deemed hazardous.

The results of the August 2020 primary election revealed there would be two new commissioners come January 2021. As a result, the previous commission decided to delay making any decisions about the church property until the new commissioners took office.

The original section of the First



Above, the Former First Christian Church.

Christian Church was built in two phases in 1908 and 1909. The architect was J. C. Holland, who had also designed the Riley County Courthouse, and the building was intentionally designed to be harmonious with the Carnegie Library and the Courthouse.

Additions and renovations occurred in 1938 and 1962. In the early 1980s, the 100 block of north Fifth Street was vacated in order to create the Courthouse Plaza, with the First Christian Church serving as the anchor on the western side of the plaza.

In June 2020, the M/RCPA's Board of Directors was provided with the opportunity to tour the church. The congregation had removed many items while vacating the building, but it was speculated that a major renovation would likely have removed many of the items anyway. Board members observed what appeared to be a solid-looking building, which would provide extensive space in an ideal location. Two M/RCPA members toured the church again in May 2021 and observed the church looked the same as it had eleven months prior; meaning, the building did not appear

to have deteriorated.

In recent weeks while the commission engaged in budget planning, citizens were invited to provide input. Tim de Noble, Dean of the College of Architecture, Planning, and Design at Kansas State, provided information about the Seaton Hall renovation, noting

that it's possible to transform an old, low technology building into a point of pride. He encouraged commissioners to develop a programming document that would show whether the church could be incorporated into the County's plans and said commissioners shouldn't assume that demolition of all or part of the building is the best course.

Kathy Dzewaltowski, M/RCPA board member, also addressed commissioners, providing information about the building's history and significance, the historic registry process, and the financial benefits available to registered properties, which could help with renovation costs.

In addition, Brent Bowman, with BBN Architects, was invited to address the commission. The County had worked with BBN Architects to develop a space needs study, which had last been updated in 2012. He indicated the study could be quickly updated and at a minimal cost. He told commissioners that he would like to revisit the church with a more holistic view and to look at it for adaptive use. He said the best recommendation might be to preserve portions of the building and remove others. Mr. Bowman also (*continued on pg. 9*)

The M/RCPA hopes you enjoy this special edition of the newsletter, featuring the projects honored by the Historic Preservation Building Awards. The recognized projects include private, commercial, and public endeavors.

The M/RCPA promotes the

preservation of historic resources in our community, and one of the ways our organization accomplishes this is by recognizing and celebrating the work done by property owners, architects, contractors, skilled artisans, and others.

The Historic Preservation

Building Awards provide the community with its only opportunity to honor achievements in historic preservation.

The 2021 awards marked the 13th time the M/RCPA has recognized local historic preservation projects since our organization's founding in 1994.

2021 Historic Preservation Building Awards

Whole Building Renovation

417 Fremont Street

Owner: FHP Properties LLC

Contributors: Architect One, Frontier Construction, Spencer Preservation

Built in approximately 1890, the Avalon Apartment building was originally a private residence. The current owner was attracted to the building's unique features and distinctive architecture, especially the front façade with its two-story stacked porches. The 130-year-old building needed extensive renovations to stabilize the structure and to make it safe for tenants. The footings of the arched porches were rebuilt. A portion of a rear wall was failing and was shored up to maintain the building's structural integrity. Interior arched doorways were maintained and repaired as needed. Hardwood flooring, interior doors, millwork and casings were retained. Other improvements included new electrical and plumbing. The result is a safe and functional apartment building that has retained its historic charm and character.



Whole Building Renovation

501 Bluemont Avenue

Owners: Gary & Christy Walter and Matthew & Megan McCrane

Contributors: Ace Drywall, Coaltrain Guttering and Exteriors, Flicks Heating and Cooling, Kansas Mechanical LLC, Larson Construction, Robert's Electric, Standard Plumbing, Superior Roofing

The 1911 home was designed by prominent local architect Henry Winter to be his personal residence. Recent improvements to the historic home included refinishing the original wood floors throughout the house; repairing window sashes and restringing sash weights; restoring interior wood trim, coffered ceilings, and two wood staircases; installing new heating and air, plumbing, and electrical; and restoring original light fixtures. In addition, exterior work included reconstructing the front porch, brick by brick, to match the original. The brickwork was also repointed as needed. The completed renovations beautifully enhance the home's historic character.

Whole Building Renovation

Delta Sigma Phi, 1100 Fremont Street

Owner: Alpha Upsilon of Delta Sigma Phi Alumni Corporation Board
Contributors: BBN Architects, Cubit Creative, Cushing Terrell, Greater Manhattan Community Foundation, Kansas State Bank, The Law Company, Spencer Preservation

Constructed in 1907 as Manhattan's YMCA, this community landmark has been home to the Delta Sigma Phi fraternity since 1955. Recent improvements were tailored to improve the building's safety, functionality, and attractiveness. The project included extensive structural improvements throughout the building, new mechanical systems, new kitchen equipment, updating bathrooms, renovating bedroom spaces, restoring wood floors and the original grand staircase, updating study areas, providing technology upgrades, as well as exterior improvements, such as replacing windows. The result is a building that blends modern comforts with historic charm.



Whole Building Renovation

401 Poyntz Avenue

Owner: SMLM Properties LLC

Contributors: BBN Architects, BHS Construction Inc., Spencer Preservation

Built in 1905 as a bank, the two-story limestone building was recently renovated to house a salon, offices, an apartment for the owner, and additional retail space. A bowed exterior rear wall was rebuilt, using salvaged stone to fill in as needed. All of the windows were replaced. A flower pattern on an exterior beam was replicated and installed in additional locations. A suspended ceiling was removed to reveal the original trim and moldings above. Three bank vaults remained in the building, and a vault door was repurposed as décor in the men's salon. The building has been updated to meet modern commercial and residential needs while maintaining the essence of its historic bank roots.



Both photos at left are courtesy of J & C Imaging.

Whole Building Renovation

314 Poyntz Avenue

Owner: A & E Property LLC

Contributors: Anderson-Knight Architects, Duell Construction, Spencer Preservation

The first and second floors of this downtown building were renovated to have retail space on the main floor, which serves as the new location for the owner's home décor store and design business, and two studio apartments on the second floor. Improvements included structural work, new electrical and plumbing, and masonry repairs. The upper level had not been used for decades, and a new staircase was constructed for access, windows were uncovered, and bricked-in windows were restored. On the first floor, a dropped ceiling was removed to reveal the original beadboard wood ceiling with exposed beams, and wood flooring was also installed. The building has been beautifully renovated in a manner that enhances its historic character.





Historic Building Restoration

700 North Manhattan Avenue

Owner: Sherilyn Bender

Contributors: BHS Construction Inc., Central Mechanical Services Inc., Charlson and Wilson, Danker Roofing, Design and Build Engineering, Economy Electric Inc., HME Inc., Krehbiel Architecture, Manko Window Systems, R. M. Baril General Contractor Inc.

Located on a prominent corner in Aggieville, the building has been a beloved community fixture for decades. While undergoing renovations in 2017, a devastating fire swept through the building, and nothing was left but the historic exterior shell. After months of removing fire- and water-damaged materials, the lengthy and painstaking process of rebuilding began. The iconic exterior walls were saved, and a new interior space was constructed. Rising from the ashes, the historic storefront reopened two years after the fire and reclaimed its place as an Aggieville landmark.



Historic Building Restoration

Historic Farrell Library

Owner: Kansas State University

Contributors: Belfor Property Restoration, Hutton Construction, John Canning & Company, PGAV Architects, Riley Construction, TreanorHL Historic Preservation

In 2018, an accidental fire occurred on the roof of Hale Library, causing extensive water and smoke damage throughout the structure. The original 1927 Farrell Library portion of the building, known for its Great Room with beautiful woodwork and New Deal-era murals, received the most severe damage. A multi-year effort was embarked on to restore the Great Room. Many months were dedicated to the painstaking process of drying, stabilizing, and repairing damage to the murals in order to return them to pristine condition. Woodwork was removed, cataloged, and



restored by hand before re-installation. Historic marble pieces were also removed, inventoried, and stored while the space was readied for their



return. The *We Are the Dream* mural in the Academic Learning Center suffered damage and was carefully restored. After an extensive restoration project, the Historic Farrell Library portion of Hale Library has returned to being a favorite study spot in the heart of campus.

Infill

512 Bertrand Street

Owner: Fati Cisse Yero Alzouma

Contributors: Anderson-Knight Architects, Frontier Construction, Manhattan Area Habitat for Humanity, and the Help of Many Volunteers

The Manhattan Area Habitat for Humanity built its 28th home



in an older neighborhood. The home was purposefully designed to blend in and be compatible with the established neighborhood. The result is the bungalow style home fits right in and looks like it's always been there. The house nicely complements its historic surroundings and is a wonderful addition to the neighborhood.



Infill

1501 Poyntz Avenue
 Owner: V & A Poyntz
 Properties LLC
 Contributors: AsterHouse
 Design, BBN Architects,
 BHS Construction

Featuring a limestone exterior, the new office building was intentionally designed to be harmonious with the historic buildings located in Manhattan's downtown and the Kansas State campus. The building's exterior reflects the architectural



styles of historic Manhattan buildings, creating the sense that it's long been a part of the community, while the interior meets the needs of a modern office. The building is an attractive addition to its neighborhood.

Maintenance & Preservation

1831 Leavenworth Street

Owners: Gabrielle Thompson, Nathaniel Thompson-Weaver, and
 Larry Weaver

Contributor: Re: Done

The formerly sagging porch of this charming bungalow was rebuilt and stabilized. While the work was underway, it was discovered that the porch's piers were resting directly on the ground, causing the



porch to lose almost one foot of height and threatening to pull the roof down. A new

foundation was established, and the porch was reconstructed in a manner to preserve the house's original appearance and historic character.



Maintenance & Preservation

814 Osage Street

Owner: Marianne Korten

Contributors: Borst Restoration/Erik Ukena, Luke Borst, & Mel Borst; Bob's Heating & Air Conditioning/Victor Steiner, Tim Umscheid, Josh Steiner; Robert's Electric/Kenny Rose, Luke Brittan, Daniel Krohn; Associated Insulation/Josh Erb, Ross Louk, & Joe Petit; Mike McKeeman Drywall Construction/Wade Spurlin, Colton Chebultz, & Jim Morton; James Roper Painting

Designed by prominent local architect Henry Winter, the home's basement was renovated to increase the amount of interior living area. Basement walls were insulated and reinforced. New bedrooms were insulated for sound. The walls of a new bath were waterproofed. The new kitchen area features hand-made Saltillo and Talavera



tiles. Salvaged interior doors that match the age of the house were used. In the living area, existing columns were retained. An emphasis was placed on maximizing sunlight throughout the house. Basement windows were enlarged, skylights were added to the attic, and the back porch was updated. A goal of the renovation was to have minimal impact on the home's exterior appearance. The result is the home retains its historic character while the updated interior provides much-needed additional space.



Maintenance & Preservation

Sunset Cemetery

Owner: City of Manhattan

Contributors: Borst Restoration, Parks and Recreation Department, R. M. Baril General Contractor Inc.

Erected in 1917 as a memorial to Union soldiers, the Sunset Cemetery gate includes an open-air shelter, which needed structural and roof repairs.



The structural integrity was improved by resetting some of the stones, establishing a new floor, and improving the drainage.

The roof project addressed areas of decay and involved replacing damaged clay tiles, which were carefully sourced to match the existing materials. The repairs to the memorial gate allow it to continue to honor those it memorializes for many years to come.



Maintenance & Preservation

418 Poyntz Avenue

Owner: Wareham Real Estate LLC

Contributors: R. M. Baril General Contractor Inc., Alan Gast, McCullough Development

Located in downtown Manhattan, the iconic Wareham Hotel building features limestone balconies with elaborate terra cotta scroll brackets and balustrades. After decades of exposure to the elements, the balconies needed repairs. A structural engineer determined three of the balconies were extremely deteriorated and needed to be rebuilt. Selective demolition was performed, and the structural engineer designed a new structural system for the balconies. An engineered product



was used to match and create casts of the terra cotta components in order to replace damaged areas. The tight downtown workspace and the height of the balconies presented challenges for completing the project. Once completed, the rebuilt balconies blend in seamlessly and enhance the historic building's exterior.



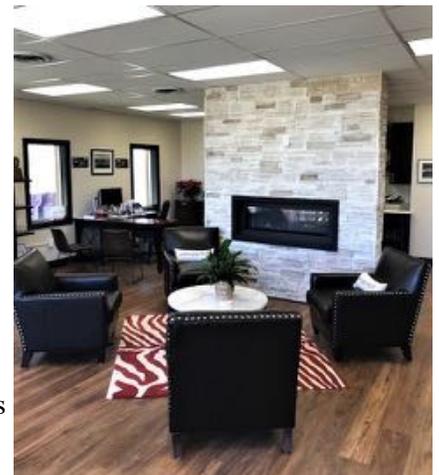
Community Enhancement

1325 Poyntz Avenue

Owners: Melanie & Karl Kunz

Contributors: Custom Wood Products, Davidson Architecture + Engineering LLC, Dottie Belle's Design, Landmark National Bank

This location has been a professional office since its construction in 1965. Purchased in 2019 by the current owners, the interior was razed and renovated in the summer of 2019. Interior changes include removing carpet and replacing with hardwood floors, removing fluorescent lights and replacing them with LEDs, removal of several walls to open the interior space, updating two bathrooms with subway tile and marble, new cabinets in the kitchen, and the addition of a beverage center in the front office space. A stone fireplace and stone columns were added as focal points. Particular attention was given to the lighting in the office's front interior and on the columns, with the goal of staying true to the original style of the building.



Community Enhancement

1331 Poyntz Avenue

Owners: Abram & Dani Mertz

Contributors: BHS Construction Inc., Lincoln Mertz, Aaron Schump

Built in 1959, the office building at 1331 Poyntz Avenue was initially constructed by linking together six independent concrete storm shelters.



This created a unique building with beautiful vaulted ceilings and no interior or exterior load-bearing walls. In 2018, Livestock Direct embarked on a complete redesign of the building, which involved

removing all of the interior walls and creating an open-concept, modern workspace. On the exterior of the building, the square footage of the windows was doubled to allow for as much natural light as possible, a patio was added, and the brick was updated with a fresh coat of white paint.

Community Enhancement

Johnny Kaw

Owner: City of Manhattan

Contributors: Bruce McMillan Architects AIA, Friends of Johnny Kaw Committee, McCownGordon Construction, Parks and Recreation Department

The Johnny Kaw legend was created in 1955 in honor of Manhattan's centennial. The statue of Johnny Kaw was erected in City Park in 1966. The improvements completed in 2019 were the first of their kind since the

original construction. The project included repairs to the statue itself, the installation of limestone steps and new railing, the addition of a sunflower-shaped accessible viewing plaza, and new interpretive panels.

Community Enhancement

1018 Poyntz Avenue

Owner: Phyllis Pease

Contributors: BBN Architects, Duell Construction

Built in 1970, the building was recently renovated to become the home of Little Batch Company Bakery.

Improvements included removing an interior wall; exposing, repairing, and polishing the original concrete floor; enlarging the front windows and adding windows on

the building's sides; and adding planters for herbs. A goal of the renovation was to be as green as possible, which involved using

reclaimed and repurposed fixtures, furnishings, and appliances. A vintage wallpaper design from a former family home in Louisiana was scanned, enlarged, and printed on vinyl for wall décor. The space has been transformed into a vibrant and charming bakery.



Interior

406 Poyntz Avenue

Business Owner: Manhattan Brewing Company LLC

Contributors: BHS Construction, Manhattan Beach Investments, Spencer Preservation, Timber and Stone Architecture + Design

Built in 1906, the first floor and basement of the historic building were recently renovated to house a brewery. Structural columns and beams were added in the basement



to support the additional load of the flooring system and brewing equipment. Plumbing and electrical were upgraded throughout the space. New wood flooring was installed on the first level, and the entire space was repainted. The result is a vibrant and functional brewery that has retained its historic charm.



The photo at left is courtesy of Michael Henry Photography.

Interior

920 North Fifth Street

Owners: Buck & Natasha Taylor

Contributor: Framework LLC

Originally built in approximately 1919 and occupied by Judge Fred R. and Josephine Smith, the interior of the home was recently updated, while retaining many of the original features. All interior doors and trim are original. The half bath



retained its original vanity and mirror. The staircase in the foyer and built-in seat are original. A scalloped trim piece above the kitchen window was repurposed on the custom range hood. A sliding barn door in the master bath was the original barn door from the barn on the property. A treasure that was discovered was the first owner's son (Gerald Smith) wrote his name on a wall of the barn. The home has been beautifully updated while staying true to its historic roots.



Friend of Historic Preservation

Woodrow Wilson Elementary School

It is with great appreciation that the M/RCPA honors the contribution of Woodrow Wilson Elementary School to the Juliette Avenue preservation project.

Originally paved in 1912, Juliette Avenue is one of the few remaining brick roadways in Manhattan. The City of Manhattan received grant funding to rehabilitate the roadway. The project involved removing and palletizing roadway bricks for re-use, establishing a new concrete base, applying a layer of sand, and reinstalling the original bricks to create a smooth surface. Woodrow Wilson Elementary School students and teachers helped workers lay the final 100 feet of the roadway, transporting approximately 6,400 bricks over the course of an afternoon. Thanks to Woodrow Wilson's help, Juliette Avenue is ready to last another one hundred years.

(continued from pg. 1)

commented that it's expensive to make a mistake and to have something you don't like later.

John Ellermann, Public Works Director, recommended to commissioners to demolish the former church and plant grass. The building's utilities have been shut off, and he was concerned the building will deteriorate. He was also concerned a vacant building would be a magnet for vandalism, pests, and vagrants. If the original section were retained and the additions removed to make way for a new addition, Mr. Ellermann had concerns about the building's structural integrity. He speculated that the original sanctuary's walls might have been compromised. His memo to commissioners stated, "It has been mentioned when the additions were constructed, the stone walls of the sanctuary were removed. The structural integrity of the sanctuary may be compromised when the additions are removed."

After listening to the various comments across multiple meetings, commissioners discussed next steps. Commissioner Focke wanted to study the situation further and thought a new study was important. Commissioner Ford thought a renovated church would still not provide the County with adequate space, and he wasn't interested in investing in further study if the end result could be a recommendation to demolish the building. He thought the building might help with the County's space needs in the short term, and he speculated that a bond

issue would be needed to finance the renovations, which he wasn't interested in. Commissioner McKinley didn't see a purpose for the former church and thought it would take a lot to renovate it and make it look nice. Rick Vargo, County Clerk, advised commissioners that space would be gained if the building were renovated, but it wouldn't be enough to address all of the County's space needs. Mr. Vargo thought other County buildings needed an investment in their maintenance ahead of investing in the former church, and he was also concerned about security with the former church.

As discussion continued, Commissioner Focke suggested holding a public meeting when the former church's future would specifically be discussed, but Commissioner Ford felt it wasn't necessary because commissioners had received plenty of feedback and doing so wouldn't change where the commission was at in the process. Commissioner Focke commented that she was not comfortable with making a decision to demolish the church without further study. Commissioner McKinley moved to seek bids to demolish the church, and the motion carried 2-1, with Commissioner Focke voting against.

There was nothing on the published agenda to alert the public that commissioners would be voting to decide the former church's fate. The agenda item that led to the motion and vote had said simply "Brent Bowman, BBN Architects, space study presentation."

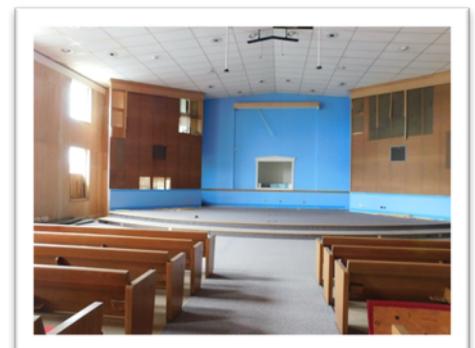
It's unknown what the costs might be to renovate the former First Christian Church. County Commission minutes from Sept. 1, 2011, indicate Mr. Bowman had studied the church building as potential additional space for the County. The minutes from 2011 show Mr. Bowman estimated the cost to renovate the building as \$3.16 million. If the former First Christian

Church were listed on the state or national historic registers, it would be eligible for financial incentives, such as rehabilitation tax credits and granting opportunities, which could help with renovation expenses.

Mr. Ellermann's memo stated the estimate for asbestos abatement for the former church was \$65,000, and the demolition estimate was \$150,000. If demolition moves forward, over \$1 million will have been invested in the property, while nothing will have been invested in updating the 2012 space needs study, examining the former church for possible adaptive use, or determining if the sanctuary's walls are sound. County officials have indicated there are no immediate plans to address space issues. Mothballing the building and determining what that would involve until such time as the County is ready to address space needs is an option that wasn't investigated and will be lost if the building is demolished. The overall impression is the building will be demolished based on speculation and incomplete information. In general, demolition of a historic building should be the last resort after other options have been exhausted.

Following the motion to seek bids for demolition, Commissioner Focke requested that a demolition bid would include preserving the limestone, which the other commissioners were agreeable to and directed staff to craft a second bid to that effect. It's unknown how quickly demolition will occur.

Below, the interior of the church in May 2021.



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2020-21 M/RCPA Membership Roster

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