
Manhattan / Riley County Preservation Alliance Newsletter

March, 2001

501 HOUSTON ST. O'BRIEN'S FOLLY

Pat O'Brien calls it her "Folly," but as an anthropologist and archeologist—now retired—she is merely doing what she has done all her professional life. Collecting artifacts. "Look at this," she says excitedly, holding up a delicately colored Art Deco ceiling light fixture. "Same brand. Same model number." She has scoured the Midwest for matching fixtures to the originals she found hanging in the upstairs apartments of her 1930s brick apartment building. In antique stores and salvage lots she has come up with exact duplicates. In Minneapolis and Sioux City she has acquired sconces matching the originals, as well as several of the two-panel doors she needs. Laid out on one of the new kitchen counters are stacks of matching face plates to be installed when all the electrical work is done. "Originals," she says, with a note of triumph. Everything electrical has been rehabed, rewired and is up to code.

Stripped to its essentials, there is a look of controlled chaos about the building. In the midst of massive rebuilding, everything is as neat as the precisely ordered tool bench in the basement. From four original apartments will come three, two on the ground floor, and Pat's double apartment above, her huge windows giving her a panorama of downtown. The downstairs apartments are spacious, with brand new kitchens refurbished "in the old style," and Art

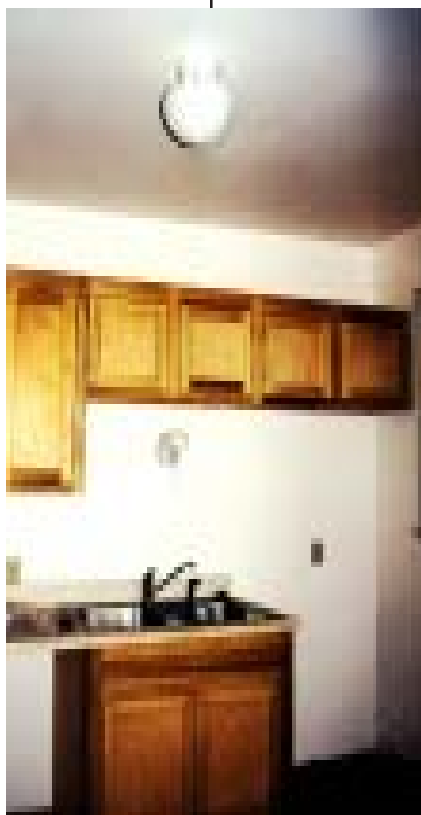
Deco light fixtures "of the period." (See photo.) In the bathrooms, Pat has preserved the original toilets, tubs, and plumbing fixtures. The recessed medicine cabinets have been temporarily removed from the walls, and as with all the trim in the

building, stripped of many layers of paint, including lead based, to give a clean finish when they are reinstalled.

The building, one of many designed by Manhattan architect Henry B. Winter, was started on St. Patrick's Day 1930. On May 27 of that year one of the workers, Peter R. Soldan, proudly etched his name into the freshly poured cement in one of the bathroom walls surrounding the tub. At the time, the building was a triumph of the Art Deco style, but through years of winds, floods, heat, cold, and fluctuating economics, it had been allowed to deteriorate, first by accommodating offices, then low-income housing. Tile went down over oak flooring on the first floor, dark paneling was

nailed across the walls, and dropped ceilings disguised the cracked plaster above. The floor tile on the first floor has now been removed (badly damaged floors will be covered by wall-to-wall carpeting); the paneling and dropped ceilings are gone, and crumbling plaster has been replaced by dry wall. New high efficiency furnace/AC units have been installed in each apartment, with ductwork above the new ceilings insulated to suppress noise. Pat believes in quality. "It pays in the long run," she says firmly, and you can see she means it.

MC



YEAR 2000 PRESERVATION AWARDS

We didn't have a newsletter last year, and now that we do, we feel it is important to honor in print the recipients of last year's awards. Their names follow, with the address of the award winning property:

Dick & Sylvia Beeman	1744 Leavenworth
Charlie & Anne Browne	1200 Houston
Tom & Lana Ellis	721 Osage
Jeff Ellison	109 Poyntz
Bob Fair	Joe's Tap Room (1124-26 Moro)
Larry & Marilyn Fox	2394 Grandview Terrace
Charles & Anne Gillum	2001 Poyntz
Marc & Kim Hoobler	1711 Leavenworth
Sherry & Jennifer Irsik	Elements of Taste (11th and Moro)
George & Annette Lauppe	328 N. 16th
Mark & Regina Oatsvall	713 Osage
Don & Ruth Okerlund	718 Osage
Ben & Phyllis Pease	221 Delaware
John & Barbara Rees	114 Evergreen
Russell & Mary Rudy	522 Colorado
David & Karen Seay	803 Pierre
Ron & Robin Sidwell	719 Osage

A Complimentary membership (March 2001-February 2002) is hereby bestowed upon each award-winning family. They will receive information about our activities through this newsletter, and we would welcome their attendance at our upcoming meetings.

HOLIDAY HOMES TOUR—2001

Once again the Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance and the Riley County Historical Society are teaming up to produce an exciting Holiday Homes Tour. Proceeds will support the Manhattan Union Pacific Depot rehabilitation project and the Wolf House Museum. Suggestions for tour sites are always welcome. Please call Linda Glasgow at the Riley County Historical Museum: 565-6490.

MARCH 8 MEETING FEATURES PROPOSED GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

Our next meeting, to be held at the Congregational Church on March 8, in conjunction with the South Side Neighborhood Association, will feature a presentation by a member of the Manhattan City Staff on the new proposed Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development.

This is in response to the controversy regarding what is known as "super-duplexes" being built, not only on the south side of Manhattan, but scattered about town in neighborhoods designated R-2. The proposed Guidelines as developed by the staff are printed below. Come prepared to ask questions and make suggestions.

DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS — RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT Draft December 5, 2000

The Manhattan Urban Area Planning Board has directed the Community Development Department to initiate a process to develop draft design guidelines for its consideration. The Planning Board is considering the introduction of design guidelines as a way of promoting quality development within the community and providing designers and developers with a set of guiding principles that clearly articulate the community's expectations.

These drafts were developed by the City's Planning Division, based on the numerous Manhattan Urban Area Planning Board work sessions over the summer and fall, which involved input from both the Planning Board and the public.

The draft Design Guidelines and Standards are intended to serve as an initial discussion document to solicit further comments and suggestions from the community and various interested groups. The document is not intended to reflect the final format and content, but to serve only as a draft discussion document before going back to the Planning Board for broader public consultation and review, prior to consideration for formal adoption.

I. PURPOSE: It is essential that new infill and multi-family residential construction be compatible and integrated with the community's established neighborhoods in order to preserve and enhance the character of the community. The design quality of new residential development contributes to the overall image of the community; helps to maintain the historic character of the older, original neighborhoods; affects the property values of surrounding properties; and

largely determines how people experience their neighborhoods. The intent of these Guidelines and Standards is to provide a clear framework within which quality infill and multi-family housing can be built without placing excessive additional costs upon home builders and future residents.

II. EXCEPTIONS: One of primary purposes of the Design Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development is to provide developers, home builders, and homeowners with enough flexibility to allow for creative, unique design. While the Guidelines and Standards provide a degree of flexibility, there are situations where a higher degree of flexibility might be warranted. Exceptions may be made for alternative design solutions that do not strictly follow each and every Guideline and Standard, but nevertheless meet the general intent of the Guidelines and Standards.

III. INFILL DEVELOPMENT—SINGLE FAMILY, DUPLEX, AND SMALL MULTI-FAMILY:

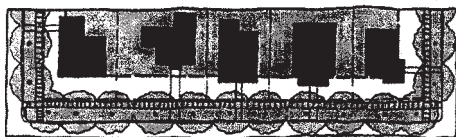
It is especially important that infill development within the older sections of town respects and maintains the integrity of those neighborhoods. The intent of the Guidelines and Standards for Infill Development is not to require new housing to be reproductions of older housing styles. However, it is encouraged that new infill development, including additions and renovations made to existing homes, incorporate some of the basic design elements characteristic of the older homes in Manhattan. In particular, infill housing should orient entrances towards the street; utilize similar roof pitches and building massing; recess garage fronts and parking areas behind dwellings; and build at the setback line typical of the neighborhood.

A. Building Orientation

Guideline: Building orientation and placement on the lot should be consistent with the traditional pattern of older neighborhoods.

Standards:

- a) The front setback of new buildings should be consistent with the predominant setback of older residences on the same and facing block.
- b) New buildings should generally provide a main entrance oriented towards the Street.



B. Building Design

Guideline: New building design should respect the character of older neighborhoods through appropriate height, scale, and massing of

the structure, and appropriate use of defining architectural elements, proportion, rhythm, and styles.

Standards:

- a) New buildings should utilize a roof type, pitch, and overhang traditionally found within the surrounding neighborhood.
- b) The rhythm and spacing of windows on front and side facades should be consistent with that of homes on the same and facing block.



- c) The provision of covered front porches is strongly encouraged.
- d) The height of new buildings should generally be consistent with that of older residences on the same and facing block fronts. Some variation is acceptable, but shorter or taller buildings should remain consistent with the "build up line."



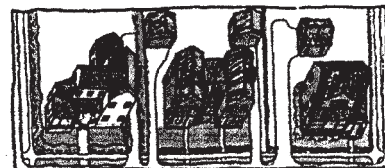
- e) The utilization of traditional architectural elements and styles characteristic of the older, established neighborhoods (or modern interpretations of traditional architectural styles) is encouraged.

C. Parking/Garages

Guideline: Garages and parking areas should be placed away from the street scene, consistent with older neighborhoods that are focused on the pedestrian instead of the automobile.

Standards:

- a) Garages should generally be located behind dwellings.
- b) The placement and design of the house should de-emphasize the garage. In cases where a garage is attached to the house, garage doors should preferably face to the side or rear.
- c) near vehicular access from an alley is preferred. In neighborhoods where driveways off the street are common, single-wide drives are acceptable. Double-wide drives are not allowed.
- d) Other than a single-wide drive, no parking space should be located between the dwelling and the front property line.



MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE, INC.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, March 8, 7:30 p.m., First Congregational Church, Juliette and Poyntz, Manhattan, KS. We will meet with members of the South Manhattan Neighborhood Group, the Neighborhood Group Coalition and city staff members regarding the proposed residential building guidelines.

Upcoming Tours (Members Only):

April: Marolyn Caldwell's strange but charming late-40s cement block 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.

NEXT MEETING: MARCH 8 — WITH NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS AND CITY STAFF

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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