
Manhattan / Riley County Preservation Alliance Newsletter

May, 2001

FIRST ON MANHATTAN'S HISTORIC REGISTER

1922 Leavenworth

Donna and Bill Schenck-Hamlin bought the "Coons' House" in 1989. They are only the third owners of this historic property located on the street formerly known as "Deans' Row." The Cape Cod styled home was built in 1930 by architect Paul



Weigel for his mother-in-law, Mattie Coons. Weigel designed not only this house, but several others on the same block. His own house is next door. Dr. Weigel headed up the architecture and allied arts department at Kansas State during his active career. The present Tri-Delta sorority house was one of his designs, as well as other notable houses in Manhattan. Hence the acceptance of this house on Manhattan's Historic Register—not only because of its beauty—but because of the prominence of both the architect and the home's original owner. Mattie Coons, it seems, was the daughter of John and Martha Mails, two of Manhattan's earliest pioneers.

Despite its pedigree, when Donna and Bill bought the house they found themselves face-to-face with multiple structural problems. A hidden roof leak had caused serious damage to all the ceilings on the west side of the house, necessitating total replacement. In addition, an overzealous plumber had at some time removed a load-bearing floor joist in the basement, and drilled through other beams to allow for heating vents, leaving

sagging floors in his wake. Much re-stabilization had to be done.

The original beauty of the house has been enhanced by its new owners. Bill stripped all the lead-based white paint from the interior woodwork and repainted.

The white trim

neatly frames earth tone painted walls. New double-pane windows were installed all around when enormous heating bills threatened. But still boasting broad baseboards and crown moulding, built-in corner cupboards, and the original fireplace mantle which snugs against the east wall of the spacious living room, the house retains its historic flavor. Donna felt the smoke-darkened brick surrounding the fireplace looked like a dark hole, and replaced it with pale marble, a complement to the pristine whiteness of the mantle. Polished hardwood floors, another product of Bill and Donna's hard work and sense of rightness, are clearly one of the most eye-catching features of the house.

Over the past 10 years Donna and Bill, while upgrading, have not only reinstated the 30s flavor of the house but have enhanced its graciousness and usability by adding six feet—and a bay window—to the back, and placing another bedroom above the built-in porch. The view above, taken from their back yard, speaks of the suitability and correctness of their vision.

**RESULTS OF THE
COMMISSION MEETING OF MAY 1, 2001**

Conditional-use permits are designed to give home-owners in older neighborhoods a chance to question developers' building plans. The proposed text of an ordinance allowing such conditional-use permits was passed by the Planning Board on April 2, 2001, and was presented to the new City Commission at its April 17 meeting by city planner, Eric Cattell. A great deal of supporting testimony was given by residents of the older areas of Manhattan, with some countering testimony from concerned builders. But the ordinance's first reading, with its many technicalities, proved confusing to the new Commissioners, and the issue was revisited as an Agenda item at the May 1 meeting, rather than being put on the Consent Agenda, as is customary. Some testimony was presented.

The results of that meeting were hopeful for areas of town now designated R-2. A motion was made that the wording submitted by the city planners be followed, rather than the convoluted and unnecessary phraseology submitted by the Planning Board (see last issue). The only exception was that the trigger for lot coverage would be 30% rather than the 25% the city had proposed. The other agreed-upon triggering criteria are: that neither dwelling unit has an attached garage; that off-street parking is proposed both in front and in back; and that the structure containing both units is on a single lot. This wording was agreeable to the majority of Commissioners. Pertinent sections of the approved ordinance follow:

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.
- (1) Churches,
 - (2) Group homes.
 - (3) Parks and playgrounds.
 - (4) Schools.
 - (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.

(1) Bed and Breakfast Homes.

(2) Bed and Breakfast Inns.

(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.

(4) Fraternities and sororities.

(5) Golf courses, including accessory clubhouses and driving ranges.

(6) Group day care centers and nursery schools.

(7) Health, fitness and service clubs.

(8) Hospitals and nursing homes.

(9) Lodging/boarding houses.

(10) Multiple-family dwelling units established prior to June 3, 1969, which have been determined to be nonconforming uses. As a conditional use the Board of Zoning Appeals shall require that the property be brought into compliance with all applicable zoning, fire, health, and the existing building codes which are in effect, before an occupancy permit can be issued.

(11) Public utilities, . . . that are not owned or operated by a municipality; . . . in or near the area they are designed to serve.

(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. These covenants or restrictions shall specify methods for dealing with common expenses

among owners within a residential structure, and other maintenance agreements consistent with shared property or easements.

- (2) Bed and Breakfast Homes. . . .

[N/A for our purposes]

4-105. R-M. Four-Family Residential District. The R-M, Four-Family Residential District is designed to promote a medium density mixture of single-family, two-family, and small multi-family residential developments, with a maximum of four (4) dwelling units per structure on a single lot and at a density no greater than four (4) dwelling units per 9,000 square feet.

[the same conditions apply for R-M]

The Conditional Use permit simply buys time for the older section of town. Home owners are now looking into the possibilities of down-zoning R-2 areas in an appropriate manner, and to this end the South Manhattan Neighborhood Association has engaged the services of Price Banks, a city planner as well as an attorney from Lawrence, KS. Contributions to SMNA's legal fund can be directed to Linda Glasgow of M/RCPA or to Mary Ann Fleming of SMNA. Since SMNA is a non-profit organization, the contributions are tax-deductible.

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THE MANHATTAN DEPOT

The fate of the old Manhattan train depot was up for grabs at the May 1 Commission meeting. Linda Glasgow, Secretary of M/RCPA, announced to the Commission that the Preservation Alliance had authorized \$8,000, which, on a 20% match to a Kansas Department of Transportation grant, will bring \$32,000 more into the depot fund coffers. The city voted to contribute \$71,050 of

capital improvement fund money, approximately \$6,000 from a hail-damage insurance claim, and \$19,000 from TIF funds in the redevelopment district where the depot is located. Riley Construction has been authorized to start work on the outside of the depot. Bruce McMillan is the architect in charge. Thursday's M/RCPA meeting will focus on the Depot. Please attend!

MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE, INC.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, May 10, 7:30 p.m., First Congregational Church, Juliette and Poyntz, Manhattan, KS. Following the meeting we will visit the not-particularly-historic but certainly curious home of Marolyn Caldwell, 1115 Colorado. Wine and cheese will be served, as well as cookies and punch.

Upcoming Tours (Members Only):

May: Marolyn Caldwell's unusual but charming late-40s masonry and brick home located at 1115 Colorado.

Interesting surprises coming up. Stay tuned . . .

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.

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: MAY 10, 7:30 PM

M/RCPA
The Riley Co. Historical Society
2309 Claflin Road
Manhattan, KS 66502