
MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER, 2007

A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT, JUDINE MECSERI

The American Heritage dictionary defines Preservation as 1. to keep or maintain intact, and 2. to protect from injury or peril. These are simple definitions that most of us understand.

Serving as an advocate for historic structures is a large part of the mission of the Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance. We want to save the best, most distinctive parts of our heritage.

When the Downtown Revitalization Project was originally developed, a series of public forums, community meetings, and discussions told us that the community

was looking forward to the creation of an urban environment—one that all Manhattanites could enjoy.

We want to enhance Downtown for future generations so that it will be a place where we can live, walk, shop the specialty stores, and dine out. We want to attract visitors to downtown Manhattan, a place that will be described as lively, engaging, and unique—in essence a true destination that makes us all proud.

The fact is that our vision has been replaced. Generic chain stores surrounded by parking lots looking like anywhere USA are being

pushed on us because the City chose to hire a developer that apparently does not have any other mode of operation.

As Dial proceeds, the news just keeps getting worse and worse. Do we really want these guys to do the South End if this is the best they can so on the North End?

This is our town and we need to take it back.

Join me at City Hall—7:00 p.m. on October 1st for the Planning Board meeting and 7:00 p.m. on October 16th for the City Commission meeting. We need you!

You are invited to attend the dedication of the historic Stillman Cemetery at Meadowlark Hills

A cemetery, in active use from about 1860 to 1900, was located on the grounds of today's Meadowlark Hills Retirement Community.

Remains from seventeen graves were excavated in the summer of 2004 by professional and student archaeologists led by Dr. Donna Roper.

The cemetery will be re-created about sixty yards from its original location in a ceremony to be held on Friday, September 14th.

Two horse-drawn merchant wag-

ons will carry the deceased from the Yorgenson-Meloan-Londeen Funeral Home on Poyntz to Meadowlark Hills. The wagons will join a walking procession at the visitors' entrance to Meadowlark (Kimball near North Manhattan) at 2:00 p.m. followed by a service to honor the deceased and their new resting place. Services will include a brief history, poetry, and songs. After the ceremony, refreshments will be served near the site on Meadowlark Circle.

The re-created cemetery, designed by Hittle Landscape Architects, overlooks the Big Blue River Valley. It includes a large grave site with some original headstones, a new but historically accurate limestone wall, a limestone-paved meditation area, seating, native wildflowers and grasses, shrubs, and trees surrounded by a small section of undeveloped native grassland and timber. A kiosk with a granite plaque displays the history of the site.

Downtown Redevelopment: The Threat and Our Response

Proposed change to the planned unit development

The Dial Corporation recently announced that it was going to request a major change to the Planned Unit Development (PUD) at the north end of the downtown to accommodate a new 100,000 square foot Hy-Vee grocery store with a liquor store and drive-through coffee chain.

The proposed change to the PUD would

- 1) move or demolish the historic Strasser House at 326 Laramie;
- 2) Eliminate nearly all the planned housing units that would have been built on Fourth Street between Osage and Moro;
- 3) Force the owners of the homes

in the Ward 2 residential district to face a two block screening wall behind which would be loading docks and temporary storage containers.

Process to change the PUD

Because this is such a major change in the PUD, Dial is obligated to go to the Planning Board for permission to build this new store. The planning board will meet on October 1, 2007, to hear Dial's arguments and to hear

public input into the request. The City Commission will hear the same arguments on October 16th at its regular legislative session. THE PLANNING BOARD IS THE KEY GATEWAY TO STOPPING THIS CHANGE IN THE PUD. If the

Planning Board votes NO, it will take four commissioners to overturn the amended PUD. If the Planning Board votes YES, it will take only two commissioners to sustain it.

What needs to be done

At a recent Planning Board meeting, the chair of the board noted that there were no people present at the meeting and therefore they did not have a good idea of what the public wanted or expected at the meeting. In other words, THE PLANNING BOARD IS VERY SENSITIVE TO PUBLIC OPINION AND IS LOOKING FOR IT IN THIS DECISION.

In its deliberations, Planning Board members will be looking at certain criteria for making their de-

cision. These criteria are known as the thirteen "GOLDEN POINTS."

The Golden Points will be very familiar for everyone who was involved in other large PUD decisions such as the Wal-Mart decision eight years ago. See page 3 for a list of the thirteen Golden points.

Those members of the public who wish to speak to the Planning Board and City Commission should address at least one of the points to make their wishes known. It is not necessary for each person

to address all of the points.

Even before these bodies meet it will be a good strategy to contact members of both the Planning Board and the City Commission to let them know what you think of this project. They will find the means to turn down the request if they feel there is enough public support for that course of action.

The addresses and email addresses of Planning Board members can be found on page 3 of this newsletter.

What exactly are the thirteen “Golden Points?”

Whenever the Planning Board or the Governing Body acts upon a proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance that is not a general revision of existing regulations and affects specific property, they shall address the following matters:

- 1) the existing use of the property;
- 2) the physical and environmental characteristics of the property;
- 3) the zoning and land uses of nearby properties;
- 4) the suitability of the subject property for the land uses to which it is restricted under current zoning;
- 5) the character of the neighborhood;
- 6) the compatibility of the proposed zoning district with nearby properties and the extent to which it may detrimentally affect those properties;
- 7) the conformance of the requested change to the adopted Comprehensive Plan for the City of Manhattan. (If the proposed amendment is in accordance with said Comprehensive Plan, it shall be presumed to be reasonable.);
- 8) the zoning history of the subject property and the length of time it has remained vacant as zoned;
- 9) whether the proposed district would be consistent with the intent and purpose of these regulations;
- 10) the relative gain to the public health, safety and welfare that a denial of the proposed amendment would accomplish, compared with the hardship imposed upon the individual owner that would result from such denial;
- 11) whether adequate sewer and water facilities, streets and other needed public services exist, or can be provided to serve the uses that would be permitted by the proposed zoning district;
- 12) the recommendations of permanent or professional staff; and
- 13) such additional matters as may apply in individual circumstances.

How do we create public support?

- Letters to the editor. Write to The Mercury’s editor at 318 North Fifth Street, Manhattan 66502, or email to letters@themercury.com. Include your name, street address, and phone number.
- Calls to KMAN—these do not need to be detailed, but persistent and they can be coordinated. The call-in program is called IN FOCUS and comes on at 9:00 a.m. Mondays through Fridays. Call 776-1350.
- Writing to commissioners and planning board members. Copy your emails to all your friends and family and encourage them to do the same. City commissioners are Tom Phillips, 1530 Barrington 66503, phillips@ci.manhattan.ks.us; Mark Hatesohl, 501 Highland Ridge Drive 66503, hatesohl@ci.manhattan.ks.us; Bob

Strawn, 1551 Williamsburg Court 66503, strawn@ci.manhattan.ks.us; Bruce Snead, 810 Pierre 66502, snead@ci.manhattan.ks.us; James Sherow, 529 Pierre 66502, sherow@ci.manhattan.ks.us.

Planning Board members are Mike Kratochvil, 2895 St. Matthews Circle 66502, mk15@sbcglobal.net; Stacy Kohlmeier, 3446 Vanesta 66503, skohlmeier@ath-florence.com; George Ham, 1028 Brianna Court 66503, gham@oznet.ksu.edu; Stephanie Rolley, 3773 Anderson 66503, srolley@purpleprairie.net; Jerry Reynard, 3308 Shady Valley Drive 66502, Reynard1@kansas.net; Bill Meredith, 1116 Wyndham Heights 66503, Meredith@ksu.edu; Mike Hill, 3314 Kensington Court 66503, cambmhk@flinthills.com.

- Hit The Mercury’s blog. While the persons who participate are not representative overall of Manhattan’s population, a growing number of people READ the blogs. Let people know what you think!
- Petitions. These are more symbolic than legal, but signatures from folks who live in the neighborhood near the proposed PUD would be the best. Any signature you can gather in your neighborhood or place of work will impress city officials. Anyone can step into the Fourth Street Café, 106 South Fourth, and sign the petition there. Tell everyone you know!
- Take out an ad in The Mercury. Anyone wishing to contribute may contact the Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance at info@preservemanhattan.org.

Frequently asked questions:

Q Why has Dial been allowed to make all these changes anyway? What happened to the plan we were shown at the start?

A Unfortunately, when the original development agreements were signed between the City and Dial, the City forfeited its interest in determining who the future designers and tenants would ultimately be. This was in exchange for not having to put any money up front for the development, thereby lowering the City's financial "risk." This was done by an earlier Commission and does not represent the work of the present one.

Q What about the Design Guidelines created by the citizen steering committee?

A The final development agreement and PUD has design guidelines in it, but again, the City was not insistent on making these guidelines mandatory—so legally Dial is not bound to follow them—and they have chosen not to. Pointing out Dial's failure to adhere to the guidelines, however,

is a good tactic in discrediting this latest change to the PUD.

Q Isn't the Strasser House protected by the National Register or an agreement?

A Yes and no. The City of Manhattan and the Kansas State Historic Preservation Officer signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) at the conclusion of a review of the historic buildings in the north end redevelopment area. The MOA is the end result of a negotiation that allowed Dial to tear down several OTHER historic buildings, with the understanding that they would not touch the Strasser House and would integrate it into the design. That, unfortunately, has not been honored. THE CITY CAN CHOOSE NOT TO HONOR THAT MOA. BUT YOU CAN CERTAINLY TELL THE COMMISSIONERS THAT YOU EXPECT THEM TO HONOR IT.

Q If Dial is turned down, won't that affect the whole project and the South End Redevelopment?

A What will happen is anybody's guess. And speculation at this point is a pretty wild exercise. We simply don't know what Dial will do. We know that there was plenty of interest by other retailers but Dial didn't like their terms. Perhaps this will push them to find better tenants, perhaps they will choose to leave the development undone for a period of time. Perhaps they will sue the City Perhaps a meteor will hit their Omaha offices. The fact is, that in spite of lots of opinions floating around, we don't actually know what will happen. What we DO KNOW is what WILL happen if we allow this change to the PUD to take place. If Dial doesn't make its tenant percentages, the City will likely have to put up some money to keep the project going, BUT that will also give the City more input into the design and tenants. LET YOUR COMMISSIONERS KNOW THAT THIS IS A MORE ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVE TO THIS PUD CHANGE. That will go a long way to helping them uphold the current plan.

Your participation is vital in the effort to save downtown.

The Manhattan Urban Area Planning Board

will meet at 7:00 p.m. on October 1, 2007.

*The Manhattan City Commission will meet at
7:00 p.m. on October 16th. See you at City Hall!*

History Quiz

Where was this “shack” located?



Courtesy of the Riley County Historical Society

The “local notes” page of the February 25, 1902, issue of Kansas State Agricultural College’s publication, *The Industrialist*, reported that “Manhattan is discussing the erection of a new city hall and fire department building.”

By June 17, 1902, *The Industrialist* reported “the city council of Manhattan has asked Professor Walters to prepare preliminary drawings and estimates for a new city hall in order to place the matter of building before the voters and call a bond election. Manhattan is preparing for a boom.”

Manhattan’s city hall was built in 1903, constructed of native limestone, 50 by 75 feet, and two stories

tall. The cost of the building and furnishings was \$10,000.

The building housed the city clerk, city engineer, city milk inspector, superintendent of the water department, as well as a storage room and vaults. The building also housed the fire department, police department, highway patrolmen, and the jail. The fire department trucks were kept on the first floor.

Weekly meetings of the city commissioners were held in a room on the second floor. Sleeping apartments for members of the fire department were also located on the second floor.

By the late 1930’s there was general agreement that city hall offices

were crowded and the building was deteriorated. The stairs were “shaky.”

On January 25, 1940, *The Mercury* wrote that “Manhattan’s city hall is all right—if you’re an antique collector. But Manhattan should get rid of this shack and incorporate a new city hall with a municipal auditorium. The horse and buggy days are fine to remember but hardly worth living in 1940.”

This situation could have provided the perfect opportunity for adaptive use, thus saving the building for posterity. Has Manhattan learned anything since 1940?

City hall stood in the 100 block of N. Third Street, north of the alley.

Preparing for the Annual Meeting

You are invited to join the Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance (M/RCPA) and to attend the annual meeting to be held on September 13, 2007, at 7:00 p.m. at Manhattan's Union Pacific Depot.

There will be a brief business meeting to elect officers and board members for the 2007–2008 year.

In addition to the elections, Dr. Lauren Ritterbush from Kansas State University's Department of Anthropology will talk on the archaeological sites of Manhattan and the surrounding area.

If you are unable to attend the meeting you may select a proxy to vote for you. Print and detach the

proxy form on the opposite page and send it to the M/RCPA at P.O. Box 1893, Manhattan, Kansas 66505, or send it with the person who will serve as your proxy.

The membership roster on the facing page shows the names of people who have already joined for the 2007–2008 membership year.

MANHATTAN RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

THE BENEFITS OF ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

\$15+ STUDENT

- *NEWSLETTER
- *EDUCATION SEMINARS

\$ 35+ MAINTENANCE

- *ALL OF THE ABOVE BENEFITS

\$ 100+ HISTORICAL

- *ALL OF THE ABOVE BENEFITS PLUS:
- *INVITATION TO SPECIAL EVENTS (FOR 2 PEOPLE)

\$ 250+ PRESERVATION

- *ALL OF THE ABOVE BENEFITS PLUS:
- *PRIVATE TOUR AND RECEPTION AT CASTLE KIMBLE (FOR TWO PEOPLE)

\$500+ LANDMARK

- (\$450 TAX-DEDUCTIBLE)
- *ALL OF THE ABOVE BENEFITS PLUS:
- *CHOICE OF SIGNED AND NUMBERED TOWER PRINT OR FORSYTHE PRINT

ALL MEMBERSHIPS ARE 100% TAX DEDUCTIBLE UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

PLEASE DETACH HERE TO RETURN YOUR MEMBERSHIP ACCEPTANCE

MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP ACCEPTANCE

___ YES! I WANT TO JOIN AT THE \$250 OR \$500 LEVEL OF GIVING AND BE A PART OF THE CASTLE KIMBLE TOUR AND RECEPTION.

- ___ \$15+ STUDENT
- ___ \$35+ MAINTENANCE
- ___ \$100+ HISTORICAL
- ___ \$250+ PRESERVATION
- ___ \$500+ LANDMARK

PLEASE RESPOND BEFORE SEPTEMBER 7, 2007.

MAKE YOUR CHECK PAYABLE TO M/RCPA AND SEND TO P.O. BOX 1893, MANHATTAN, KANSAS 66505-1893

NAME: _____ ADDRESS: _____

PRINT YOUR NAME AS YOU WISH IT TO APPEAR IN THE NEWSLETTER: _____

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS TO RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER VIA THE INTERNET: _____

IF YOU PREFER TO RECEIVE YOUR NEWSLETTER THROUGH THE POSTAL SERVICE, CHECK HERE: ___

A New Membership Year: 2007-2008 Roster

\$15+ Student Level –

\$35+ Maintenance Level – Beverly Azer, Greg & Mary Bell, Charlene Brownson, Diana Chapel, Kitty Cool, Mike & Jan Danenberg, Nancy Danner, Lelah Dushkin, Calvin & Genie Emig, Endacott Lighting, Mary Ann Fleming, Bernd & Enell Foerster, Peggy Frazier, Conn & Di Harrison, Chuck & Charlotte Herr, Robin & Barbara Higham, Corina Hugo, Jean Hulbert, Eileen & Brad Koehn, Debbie Madsen, Elaine & Robert Mohr, Frances Nedwed, Bill Pallett, Julia Lea & Chris Parsons, Lex & Patty Pearson, Mary Don Peterson, Lawrence & Mary Pollack, Gerald & Martha Powell, Roger Reitz M.D., Lauren W. Ritterbush & Family, Richard & Kimberly Smith, S.G. & J.A. Tilley, Cheryl Walters, Patricia & Ray Weisenburger, Georganne & Warren White, Judy Macy Willingham, Van & Barbara Withee.

\$100+ Historical Level– Barbara G. Anderson, Art Craft Printers & Design, Mimi Balderson, Jane Bowers, Bowman Bowman Novick, Inc., Commerce Bank, John & Bonnie Devore, Dan & Latane Donelin, David & Kathy Dzewaltowski, Fran Ellis, Howard, & Ann Erickson, Rev. H. Wayne & Beverly Fink, Brian Hardeman & Jayme Morris-Hardeman, Kathleen & Don Heon, Marjorie Heyne, Pat & Rita Keating, John & Cindy LaBarge, Eugene Laughlin, Jon & Lila Levin, Master Landscape, Inc., John & Karen McColloh, Bruce McMillan AIA Architects P.A., Michael & Judine Mecseri, Deb Nuss, Tom & Karen Roberts, James Sherow & Bonnie Lynn-Sherow, Suzanne Siepl-Coates & Gary Coates, George & Julie Strecker, Chuck & Marsha Tannehill.

\$250+ Preservation Level– Burke & Margery Bayer, Larry & Linda Glasgow, Hittle Landscape Architects, Mr. & Mrs. Perry C. Peine, Russell L. Reitz MD, Verlyn Richards, Gwyn & Gina Riffel, Steve & Debbie Saroff, Karen Sheffield, Steve & Whitney Short, Gary & Sharon Younger.

\$500+ Landmark Level– Phil & Margaret Howe.

Additional names will be added to the roster as membership forms are received.

PROXY

KNOW ALL PERSONS BY THESE PRESENTS:

That the undersigned member of Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance does appoint member (print name) _____ as my agent for me and in my name, place, and stead to vote as my proxy, at the Annual Meeting of the members of the Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance, to be held on September 13, 2007.


Dated this ____ day of _____ 2007.

Member Signature: _____ Print Name: _____

M/RCPA
P.O. Box 1893
MANHATTAN, KS
66505-1893

M/RCPA Underwriters

THE PRESERVATION ALLIANCE APPRECIATES THE GENEROSITY OF THE UNDERWRITERS WHO HELP TO DEFRAY THE COSTS OF PRODUCING AND MAILING OUR NEWSLETTER.



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