

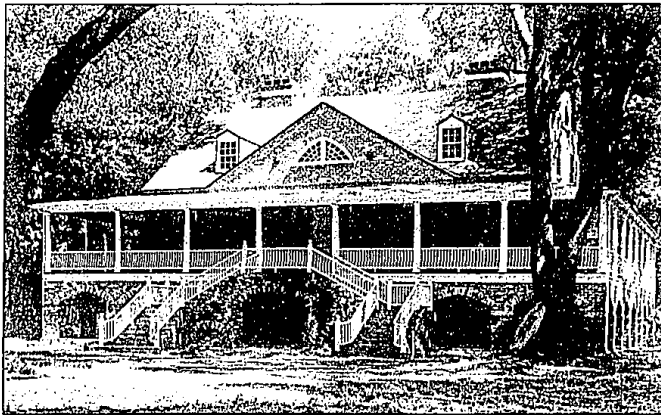
Building Scene

Marilyn Fitchett editor/591-2300



Thursday, January 4, 1990 O&E

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The old South comes to life in new house

By Louise Okrutaky
staff writer

When clients asked Cambridge Builders and architect Walter Melonio to reproduce a historic home, the challenge lay in providing modern amenities in an unobtrusive fashion.

The owners, husband and wife history buffs, settled on reproducing Dean Hall, built in 1827 by a cotton and rice plantation owner in South Carolina. It was chosen after Melonio and the couple looked over their snapshots of various historic homes from different eras.

"They had taken pictures of Victorians, Georgians. They really did the whole eastern seaboard," Melonio said.

Victorian homes were dropped from consideration because the cost of replicating the ornate details found in those homes was too high for the couples' budget.

Instead they settled on the brick raised cottage style house built by Yale-educated planter William A. Carson.

They chose the house at the same time they found a lot for it in Pleasant Hills subdivision, Northville. Bordered on two sides by wetlands which can't be disturbed, the lot suits a home originally built in the rural South.

Dean Hall was located originally on the site of what became Cypress Gardens. The house has since been moved to Huspah Creek in Beaufort County, near Hilton Head, S.C. With the lot, the reproduction cost approximately \$400,000.

As in the original, the upper floor rests on 20 arches. The arched basement is used for storage and the upper floors are devoted to living space.

In deference to late 20th century amenities, an attached garage was added to the reproduction. Attached to the main house by a small breezeway that contains an extra bath, the garage echoes the shape and lines of the house without the brick arches under it. A curved window in the house's second story front is repeated on a smaller scale in the garage.

Although the original includes a piazza, a covered porch on four sides of the house, the reproduction features it on three sides to accommodate the garage wing.

Melonio based his design on a photograph of the original house. He counted bricks to estimate the proportions of the house. "You have to

Architect Melonio based his design on a photograph of the original house. He counted bricks to estimate the proportions of the house. He estimated the columns running along the porch measured 10 inches around at the top and tapered to eight inches.

almost think what the architect was thinking," Melonio said.

Judging from the photograph, he estimated the columns running along the porch measured 10 inches around at the top and tapered to eight inches. The wooden columns were specially made for the house at about \$800 apiece.

When it came to reproducing the brick accents on the lower arches, Cambridge commissioned bricks without the series of holes the modern types contain. But the brick used throughout the house is a modern standard design that approximates the original.

At the front entrance, the house features a small foyer common to the early 19th century. Instead of opening into the foyer, the stairway leads into the kitchen at the back of the house.

"We knew nothing about the interior," Melonio said. The back of the home contains a 20-by-18 foot kitchen with a fireplace and family room. The simple mantle of the fireplace is similar to those found in 19th century kitchens. It features fireplace cupboards on one side which hide a television and VCR. Modern kitchen cabinets and a cook top take up the work side of the room. French doors lead to a rear porch.

The front parlor features a five-foot-tall hand-crafted oak mantle over the fireplace.

Upstairs over the garage, the master bedroom's sloping ceiling gives it an antique feel. Connected with the bedroom by a dressing room with a walk-in closet, the bath contains a whirlpool tub and a walk-in shower.



BILL BRESLER/staff photographer

At top, the original Dean Hall in black and white that was located originally on the site of what became Cypress Gardens. The house has since been moved to Huspah Creek in Beaufort County, near Hilton Head, S.C. The color photo shows the reproduction. As in the original, the upper floor rests on 20 arches. The arched basement is used for storage, and the up-

per floors are devoted to living space. In deference to late 20th century amenities, an attached garage was added to the reproduction. Although the original includes a piazza, a covered porch on four sides of the house, the reproduction features it on three sides to accommodate the garage wing.

Builders group hires go-between

By Gerald Frawley
staff writer

Local government and planning agencies are seeing a new face at many of their meetings: the Builders Association of Southeastern Michigan has hired a go-between.

Marlin Rubin, former assistant planner at the Oakland County community and economic development department, was hired at the end of October to act as a liaison between the association and township and city planning agencies.

Part of Rubin's job is to attend area planning commission meetings and keep the BASM abreast of new developments that might affect developers. But he will also act as an advocate for the group, representing builders in what has become an un-

friendly arena in recent years as no-growth and slow-growth pressures escalate.

"I believe in balance. Whether it's a healthy diet or a healthy community, you've got to have balance," Rubin said. Helping to provide balance, he said, is what he hopes to accomplish.

In addition to meeting regularly with building department officials in communities with significant development, Rubin also intends to become active in local chambers of commerce and the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments planning committees.

"IT'S NIGHT and day, night and day," Rubin said of his recent switch.

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—Marlin Rubin

*liaison
Builders Association of
Southeastern Michigan
and community planning
agencies*



Marlin Rubin

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