

CHAPTER TWO: MARIETTA HISTORIC DISTRICT

2.1 Historical Narrative

Note: This narrative is largely taken from “History of Marietta” provided by the City of Marietta’s website: <http://www.mariettaga.gov/community/history.aspx>.

Before there was an Atlanta or a Chattanooga there was Marietta, Georgia. A small cluster of homes near the Cherokee town of Kennesaw were reported as early as 1824. An early road in what would become Cobb County crossed the “Shallow Ford” of the Chattahoochee and ran just south of these settlers.

In 1832 the state of Georgia formed 10 counties from what had been Cherokee land. Cobb County was named for Thomas Willis Cobb, U.S. Representative, US Senator and Supreme Court Judge. In 1837 The Georgia Gazetteer reported that the city of Marietta was named for Cobb’s wife. The Georgia legislature legally recognized the town on December 19, 1834, but by that time a sizable community already existed. The first plat for the city, since destroyed, was laid out by James Anderson in 1833, who had worked extensively in north Georgia. Like most towns, Marietta had a square in the center with a modest courthouse.

Three years later the state assembly approved a bill creating the Western and Atlantic Railroad. Colonel Stephen Long, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, was chosen to head the project and he selected Marietta as home base. The impact of locating near Marietta Square was significant. Business began to boom. Three taverns sprang up around the center of town to accompany the early stores of Thomas Johnston and George Winters, John Lemon, Watson W. Simpson, and James Waller. A tanyard was nearby.

By 1838 roadbed and trestles had been built north of the city. Construction continued until 1840 when Long quit, having been criticized by politicians for being too slow. He felt the criticism unfounded and he was probably correct. For two years work came to a standstill until another engineer was found. On February 7, 1842 Charles Fenton Mercer Garnett took over, using the area that would become Atlanta as his base.

As crews began to clear and grade north of the town a new pastime became popular. The roadbed was perfect for horse racing, and the sport grew quite popular, taking place in the approximate area of the present-day Welcome Center. The Western and Atlantic began to operate from Atlanta to Adairsville in 1845 and through to Chattanooga in 1850. Tanyards became a thriving business and, coupled with railroad-related revenue, made up a major portion of the city’s business income.



Figure 2.1: “Cotton Time on the Square,” circa 1905. Courtesy of the Digital Library of Georgia, Georgia Secretary of State Archives.



Figure 2.2: The Strand Movie Theater, 1964. Courtesy of the Digital Library of Georgia, Georgia Secretary of State Archives.



Figure 2.3: View of eastern side of Marietta Square circa 1910 showing stores along it, looking southward toward courthouse. Courtesy of the Digital Library of Georgia, Georgia Secretary of State Archives.

Arriving in 1848, John Glover quickly became a successful businessman and popular politician. So popular that when the town incorporated in 1852, Glover was elected its first mayor. Although the Glovers would be successful at many endeavors through the years, among the earliest successes were a tanyard and warehouse. Also moving to the city were Dix Fletcher, who managed the Howard House, which served as a stagecoach stop, and Henry Greene Cole who ran Cole's, a "bed and breakfast" of the day. One famous guest in the Howard House register was Zachary Taylor of Washington City. Cole ran a hotel called the Marietta Hotel on the south side of the square. It was known as the finest in Marietta.

To the west of the city, near the base of Kennesaw Mountain, a "Dr. Cox" offered treatment with his "water cure." Although visitors described it as "invigorating," most probably just came to get away from the bug-infested coast and to enjoy the good food; however, by 1861 Cox began what would develop into a substantial tourist industry. "Dr. Cox" was a real medical doctor, named Dr. Carey Cox, and practiced what is known as homeopathic medicine today. The Cobb Medical Society recognizes him as the first physician.

The Georgia Military Institute was built in 1851 about a mile from the square on Powder Springs Road. Classes began in July with just seven students. By the end of the first year, 28 men were in attendance. During the 1850s fire destroyed much of the city on three occasions. The first, in 1854, destroyed the Howard House and threw Dix Fletcher out of work. He took Mayor Glover's warehouse, which had been spared, and turned it into the Fletcher House, another bed and breakfast to serve the visitors of the growing town. John Denmead, a contractor who helped build the railroad, stayed on and opened the first bank in the city in 1855.

By the time the Civil War began in 1861, Marietta had recovered from the fires and was booming. The Raiders spent the night of April 11 and stole the train on April 12. Twenty-One of the men stayed in the Fletcher House and 2 stayed in Cole's Marietta Hotel. On the night of April 12, 1862, a group of 23 men spent the night split between Cole's and the Fletcher House. Early the next morning they met in James Andrews' room and proceeded to Marietta Station. Boarding a train, they commandeered it a few minutes later in Big Shanty. The next 50 miles of the ride has been dramatically recreated for generations and is now generally referred to as "The Great Locomotive Chase."

During the summer of 1864, forces under the command of William Tecumseh Sherman moved in and occupied the town. For the next five months, federal troops would pillage by day and ravage by night. In November, 1864, men under the command of Union General Hugh Kilpatrick, Sherman's "merchant of terror," set the town on fire. "Uncle Billy's" boys were leaving for the heart of Georgia on "The March to the Sea."

In 30 years as a town Marietta had seen more history than most towns see in a century. Witness the history of the city at the exciting Marietta History Museum on the second floor of the Kennesaw House. See the room where Andrew's Raiders finalized their plans for the Great Train Robbery. Visit the Cherokee section and learn about "removal" on the Trail of Tears.



Figure 2.4: The Marietta Passenger Depot circa 1973 prior to restoration. Courtesy of the Digital Library of Georgia, Georgia Secretary of State Archives.

2.2 Building Types

One Part Commercial Block Building

(1840s – 1950s)

Simple, one story box with decorated elevation found in urban settings.



Figure 2.5: Example of a One Part Commercial Block Building

Two Part Commercial Block Building

(1840s – 1950s)

Two – four story urban building with two distinct zones on its façade: 1st floor retail and upper floors of office or other private space.

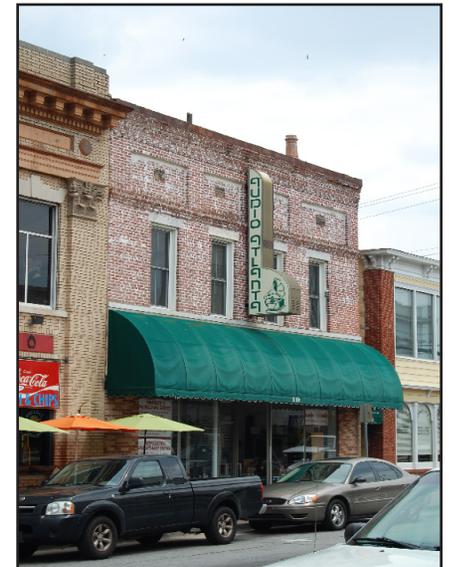


Figure 2.6: Example of a Two Part Commercial Block Building

Enframed Block

(1900 – 1920)

Two or three story urban buildings with the majority of the main façade punctuated by columns, pilasters, or other classical treatments.



Figure 2.7: Example of an Enframed Block

Enframed Window Wall

(1890s - 1940s)

Used typically for small or moderately-sized commercial buildings at the turn-of-the-twentieth. They are characterized by a wide continuous border enframing a central section of the building; and are typically two or three stories in height.



Figure 2.9: Example of an Enframed Window Wall building

Temple Front

(1900 -1940s)

The front elevation is derived from Greek and Roman temples. They are generally two or three stories in height and often located on a corner lot with a subordinate side elevation.



Figure 2.8: Example of a Temple Front building

Georgian House

(1800s – 1900s)

A residential house type that is at least two stories in height with a character-defining central hallway flanked by two rooms. This house type has been popular in Georgia throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.



Figure 2.10: Example of a Georgian House

Queen Anne Cottage & House

(1880s - 1900s)

Features an asymmetrical floor plan with a projecting ell from the front and a side elevation. A one story example is a cottage and a two or more story example is classified as a house.



Figure 2.11: Example of a Queen Anne House

American Small House

(1930s – 1950s)

A compact three-, four-, or five-room house with an irregular floor plan, usually with a moderately pitched end-gable roof, sometimes with small wings or rear ells.



Figure 2.13: Example of an American Small House

Gabled Wing Cottage & House

(1875 – 1915)

This house type features an L- or T-shaped plan with an ell projecting from the front and/or rear elevations. The cottage is classified as one story in height and the house is two stories in height.



Figure 2.12: Example of a Gabled Wing House

2.3 Building Styles

Folk Victorian

(1880s – 1930s)

Most common style for simple, functional commercial buildings with modest detailing – typically only a corbelled brick cornice.



Figure 2.14: Example of the Folk Victorian style

Neoclassical Revival

(1900s – 1940s)

This building style is typically symmetrical, utilizing classical elements like a portico, pilasters, columns, and/or a pediment or cornice. Other classical detailing can be taken from Roman or Greek architecture.



Figure 2.16: An example of the Neoclassical Revival style popular for public buildings, institutions and homes.

Victorian

(1890s – 1910s)

A blending of two or more styles to produce an unusual result – typically a hodgepodge of nineteenth century styles, i.e. Queen Anne, Folk Victorian, or an exotic revival.



Figure 2.15: Example of the Victorian style typical of residential architecture. Example of the Folk Victorian style

Art Deco

(1930s – 1940s)

This style is exemplified with a smooth exterior surface often of stucco or marble with simple geometric ornamentation and an emphasis on verticality.



Figure 2.17: An example of the Art Deco style that was popular for movie theaters and other early twentieth century public buildings.

2.4 Character-defining Features

Character-defining features are features that are inherent to a building's architectural style and its building type. The example below is an Enframed Block with Neoclassical Revival style. The character-defining features of this building correlate to the elements that make it an Enframed Block (i.e., two story height, pilasters and classical detailing) building with Neoclassical Revival style (i.e., symmetry, pilasters and classical pressed metal cornice with entablature). Other features of this building that are character defining are its parapet wall, fenestration (placement of windows and doors) and masonry exterior.

To obscure, remove or significantly alter character-defining features would adversely affect the resource's ability to reflect its associated building style and type. Sections 2.2: Building Types and 2.3: Building Styles of this document list the character-defining features for each building style and type found within the District. In Figure 2.18 the character-defining features of the building are defined by the building's style (Neoclassical Revival) and the building type (Enframed Block). These character-defining features are highlighted below.

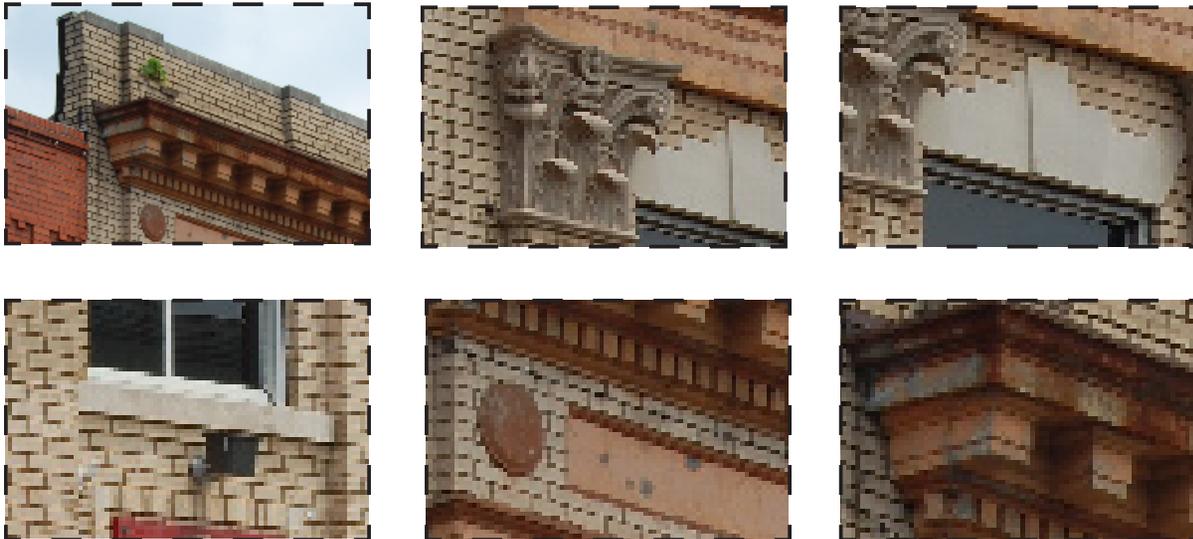


Figure 2.19: The six primary character-defining features of the building are: parapet wall (top, left); corinthian column capitals (top, middle); cast stone lintel with keystone (top, right); cast stone sill (bottom, left); medallions and dado panels (bottom, middle); and dentiled cornice (bottom, right).



Figure 2.18: This Neoclassical Revival style Enframed Block building has several character-defining features. These are outlined in Figure 2.19.

2.5 High Style vs. Vernacular

The majority of buildings found within the Marietta Historic District are vernacular in design. However, there are examples of high style architecture within the district. A building with minimal architectural ornamentation (vernacular) is considered to be the equal of a building with numerous decorative elements (high style). An unadorned building is sometimes referred to as vernacular, meaning that it is the work of a craftsman following local building traditions without a conscious attempt to mimic current architectural fashion. High-style buildings, on the other hand, were often architect-designed and show the influence of current architectural styles. Such buildings are accentuated with architectural elements and details that reflect a specific architectural style or styles. Both vernacular and high-style buildings can have an identified building type.



2.20: The two commercial buildings above are different in that the left example is “high style” and the right example is “vernacular.” A vernacular building was typically designed by a local craftsman with minimal stylistic elements as is the case here. Meanwhile a high style building was designed by an architect with extensive architectural ornamentation in a cohesive style. Although the buildings were designed differently (local building techniques versus schooled design), both are equally important to the history and architectural integrity of the District.

2.6 Prevailing Character of Existing Development

Marietta, like other communities in Georgia, is a product of prevailing design concepts that result in visual relationships between buildings, blocks, streets, commercial and residential neighborhoods. This creates an experience unique to each community; creating a “sense of place.” These design concepts are:

Building Orientation & Setback refers to the directional placement of the building on the site, while setback refers to how far back the building is from the street and side lot lines. See Figure 2.21.

Directional Emphasis is determined by the size and placement of elements and openings in a building’s front elevation as well as by the building’s overall shape, materials and detailing. Typically directional emphasis is either vertical or horizontal. See Figure 2.22.

Shape is defined by a building’s surfaces and edges. The overall shape, in concert with the shapes of individual elements (such as roof pitch, window and door openings, etc.), is important in establishing rhythms in a streetscape. Shape may also be an important element of architectural style or type. See Figure 2.23.

Massing is the relationship of a building’s height, width and depth, as well as its architectural features. There may be more than one massing concept for a building – for example, the main block of a building, the roof, projections and additions. These various elements create an overall compilation that creates a massing pattern. This pattern may be either symmetrical or asymmetrical. See Figure 2.24, next page.

Proportion is the relationship of one dimension to another; for example, the relationship of the height to the width of a building, or the height and width of windows and doors. Individual elements of a building should be proportional to each other and the building. See Figure 2.25, next page.

Rhythm is the recurring pattern of lines, shapes, forms, colors and/or materials on a building or along a streetscape. For example, the rhythm of openings on a building

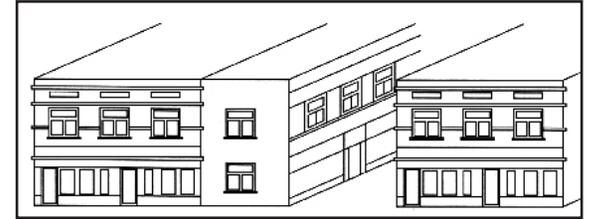


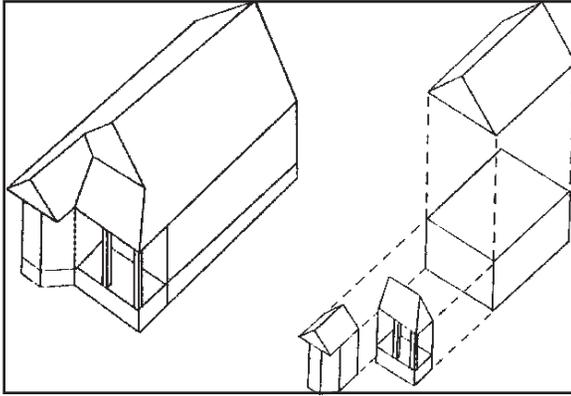
Figure 2.21: This sketch shows two extant buildings fronting on a public right-of-way with an inappropriate infill construction between them that is orientated to the side.



Figure 2.22: This sketch shows an inappropriate infill construction (far right) that has horizontal emphasis while the buildings in its area of influence have a vertical emphasis.



Figure 2.23: This sketch depicts buildings that all have appropriate window, door and roof shapes. Introduction of a gabled roof form or round window openings within this area of influence would be inappropriate.



2.24: These sketches depict a residential massing (left) and the massing of the building broken down into its basic



2.25: In this sketch the proportion of the infill construction (one story) is inappropriate to the two story height of the

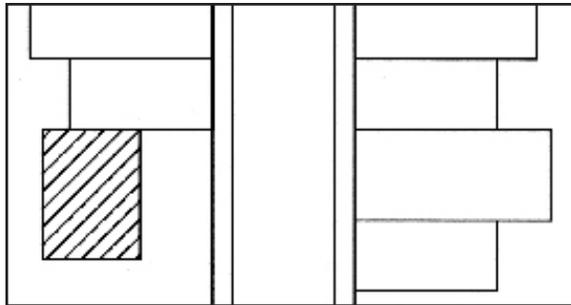


Figure 2.26: The rhythm established along the street of this sketch by the extant buildings being flush to the lot line is inappropriately disrupted by the infill construction

refers to the number and placement of windows and doors on an elevation. Rhythm also occurs on the larger scale of streetscapes as created by development patterns (orientation and setback) and details of individual buildings (directional emphasis, scale and height, massing, etc.). See Figure 2.26.

Scale refers to the apparent relationship between two entities, such as the relationship of a building's height to human height, the relationship between different buildings' heights and sizes, or the relationship between the size of an addition and the building to which it is attached.

Architectural Elements found within the area of influence are important considerations when determining character-defining features of an existing project or determining the design of infill construction. See Section 3.4 and 9.3.

All new construction, whether infill construction or an exterior change in appearance, should be consistent with the dominant patterns of these concepts found within a project's area of influence.



Figure 2.27: This infill construction (2nd from right) is out of scale compared with the existing architecture within its area of influence, as evidenced by window/door/floor heights not