

LETTER

Building Doesn't Reflect City

The following are my observations on builder Mark Knapp's proposed "art deco" building on Bullard Parkway.

First, the building is not art deco. It's a folksy rendition of 1980s postmodern – think "Miami Vice."

Second, it's postmodern because it's an inexpensive style to build, i.e. no clay tile roof, wrought iron, real stucco or steel windows as with the Mediterranean Revival style.

Thirdly, despite claims to the contrary, Knapp is no friend of Mediterranean Revival architecture as he's been its opponent on key local buildings in the past.

In 2005, more than 1,000 Temple Terrace residents attended planning workshops for the planner to gather input for our downtown redevelopment master plan.

During those workshops, the residents unequivocally advocated the Mediterranean Revival architectural style based on Temple Terrace's own unique 1920s variant.

Thus far, this architecture best represents Temple Terrace's character and essence.

Even if Knapp's proposed building were art deco, one would need to ask why? Art deco was based on a Depression-era admiration of streamlining based on ocean liners, etc.

You can see the maritime relationship of art deco in Miami today where the 1930s hotels front the ocean and mimic ships though their use of round windows, pipe railings

and stack-like vertical elements.

The only body of water that Knapp's building can possibly relate to is the murky retention pond on Sunnyside Road.

Art deco is not an appropriate genre for our area as it does not reflect our history, culture or climate. In short, it has nothing to do with Temple Terrace.

As Knapp points out, property owners' rights are an important consideration, but they must be balanced with the rights of the community in which we all live.

This is crucial regarding Knapp's edifice as it sits on a busy public corridor, is being built with the intention of leasing it to the public as an office and the building site is adjacent to our downtown redevelopment area.

Unfortunately, the building is not actually in the downtown redevelopment area as it would then be obligated to follow the Interim Redevelopment Code, and not our worthless citywide building code, which will soon be re-vamped.

When building within the public realm, we need to mindfully balance our desire to express our individual rights with the diligent preservation of those community elements that lend Temple Terrace its special character and essence.

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Temple Terrace

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