

## REV. E. MEANY HOUSE HISTORIC DISTRICT A PRESCOTT HISTORIC PRESERVATION DISTRICT

### 18.1 DISTRICT OVERVIEW AND HISTORY

#### 18.1.1 Overview and History

The Rev. E. Meany House Historic District, a Prescott Preservation District, is a single building district within the original Prescott Townsite.



*Rev. E. Meany House, 118 South Pleasant Street (1893); 1893 and Today - The Rev. E. Meany House Restoration Won the 1996 Governor's Award for Historic Preservation (Commercial Category)*

The entire block of land bordered by Gurley, Pleasant, Union (then called Victory) and Alarcon Streets was once owned by Governor Tritle, who served when Prescott was the Territorial Capital of Arizona. Governor Tritle lived in a large mansion north of the Meany House on the southwest corner of Gurley and Pleasant Streets (his house burned down in the 1920s). The building at 310 Union Street (two doors to the west of the Meany House) is thought to have been the carriage house for the Governor's home.

On the 1890 Sanborn Fire Maps, the property on which the Meany House rests is labeled "site for future dance hall." This use was not to be realized, however, as the property was sold in 1892 to Frank Murphy, an important venture capitalist in early Prescott. Mr. Murphy began construction of this home the same year and sold it to Rev. Meany, an early Episcopal minister in the area. The Meanys moved to Prescott in an effort to improve the health of Mrs. Meany, who suffered from consumption. The home included its own carriage house, which occupied the southwest corner of the first floor. The downstairs also had a sitting room, parlor, dining room and kitchen. The upstairs consisted of four bedrooms and one bathroom.

The Meanys lived in this home until the late 1890s. The property changed hands several times until it was converted to "flats" in the 1920s. Sleeping porches were added to the back of the house, as well as a room above the old carriage house. Of these additions, only the later remains. The property fell into disrepair until it was restored in 1995. Although several original items were retained (such as the original siding and most of the front porch) many items were replaced which were damaged or had long since disappeared (such as the chimneys, windows, and rails and trim around the first and second floor porches). In 1996 the restoration of the Rev. E. Meany House won the Governor's Award for Historic Preservation. The building now houses professional offices.

#### 18.1.2 Location

The Rev. E. Meany House Historic District is located at 118 South Pleasant Street, on the northwest corner of South Pleasant and Union Streets. The house faces east and presents its broad face to the street. It is two blocks

from the Courthouse Plaza and the many business, entertainment and government functions located there. The district is also located close to Gurley Street, one of the busiest commercial corridors in Prescott. The district is near numerous other historic buildings and districts in the area, reflecting its prime location and context within early Prescott. The building is surrounded by and is a contributor to the East Prescott National Register Historic District.

The boundary of the district, along with current zoning, is shown on Figure 18-1.

### 18.1.3 Formation of the Historic District

The ordinance establishing the local district was completed in 1996 at the request of the owners, and the local guidelines and standards for the district were approved by the Prescott City Council in September of 1996.

### 18.1.4 Prescott Preservation District Responsibilities

The Prescott Preservation Commission has review responsibilities for the Rev. E. Meany House Historic District. The review process is required for any project requiring a building permit. Applicants are encouraged to meet with the City's Preservation Specialist prior to submission to answer any questions and obtain assistance in designing a historically compatible project.

## 18.2 DISTRICT QUALITIES AND DESIGN ELEMENTS

### 18.2.1 Architectural Overview

The house is a two story wood frame structure. The architectural style is Vernacular with Victorian elements. The main part of the house is about 35 feet wide and 25 feet deep. A two story wing extends off the back (west). The major design features of the house are concentrated on the front which is dominated by a full-length porch with an upper deck for the second story. Fish scale shingles cover the upper wall between the eave lines and the deck. Elaborate jigsaw work was originally used in the railing of the deck and porch, which was replaced during the recent renovation using historic photographs. Curved brackets decorate the porch columns.

The house is irregular in plan and symmetrical in massing. The house is raised on a stuccoed stem wall with a large crawl space beneath. The wood siding remains, as does the corner brackets supporting the gable corners. The steeply pitched roof is covered by asphalt shingles which replaced earlier wood shingles.

The central entry is flanked by two discrete "one-over-one" double-hung windows with a strong vertical orientation. The main roof is a side gable



*Box Car Derby on South Pleasant Street, 1948; Rev. E. Meany House in Background*





*Rev. E. Meany House - Front  
Porch Detail*

with an offset gable extension to the rear. Within the continuous dormer above the front porch are symmetrically located windows of the same style as the first floor. The porch is flat roofed with six doubled chamfered wood columns rising from the porch floor to the frieze. Jigsawed brackets and spindles decorate the front facade. There are bays at the north and south sides with hipped roofs. A stained glass transom is located above the large carved wood entry door. Two brick chimneys top the ridge. The chimneys are decorative only and replaced crumbling flues during restoration.

The landscaping is in good condition and includes grass along the Pleasant Street parkway as well as the south side yard. This helps place the building within the Victorian ideal of a home set in its own formal landscape. Four new sycamore trees are also located in this parkway, as is one of several historic street lamps located along Pleasant Street. The parkway along Union Street has been removed for parking with planters set at either end. The rear yard has also been paved for parking. Other landscape elements include new raised planter walls at the front of the house which are finished to match the stem wall. Automobile access is at the rear or along a narrow drive shared with the property to the north.

## **18.2.2 Landscape/Streetscape**

The landscape of the property has been documented. Planter walls are set on the front property line, with the house only about ten feet from the sidewalk. Parking is at the rear, at the side in the improved area along Union Street, and a few vehicles park diagonally on Pleasant Street.

## **18.2.3 Integrity**

The Rev. E. Meany Street Historic District is in good condition, as evidenced by the 1996 Governor's Award for Historic Preservation. The building is an intact and excellent example of early Prescott architectural style and is associated with several prominent early citizens. Easily visible from Gurley Street, it has become a gateway building for the South Pleasant Street neighborhood.

## **18.3 DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **18.3.1 Opportunities Within the District**

The Rev. E. Meany House Historic District is valuable local preservation district within the context of a larger National Register District. As a historic building, it is an excellent example of Vernacular Victorian residential architecture in Prescott during the early 1890s; in its present use as professional offices, it provides a transition between the busyness of the commercial corridor of Gurley Street and the quieter residential neighborhoods of East Prescott without sacrificing historic integrity.

Although development pressures caused the building to be used as "flats" long ago, the rehabilitation of the building to its present use appears to be a compatible one. Thus, the continued use of the building should remain the same or similar to its present use, while providing historic character to the neighborhood and acting as a buffer to more intensive development.

The zoning of the property as Residential "C" (RC) is compatible with the location and historic use of the structure. This classification encourages residential uses but allows adaptive reuse for distressed properties or areas in transition. However, it must be noted that within RC zoning there are a number of potential uses that would be clearly incompatible with a historic neighborhood. For a fuller discussion of these concerns, see the East Prescott Historic District section of this Historic Preservation Master Plan.

Business and commercial reuse of historic properties is often a valid and practical modern application of these buildings. However, these uses must be carefully reviewed to ensure that the reuse does not destroy the character of the area through indirect means (such as traffic and the paving of front yards and parkways). Likewise uses should be discouraged that require large parking lots to meet public demand or the zoning code. Often, the demolition of historic buildings is required to meet the need for such on-site parking demands, thus hamstringing preservation efforts. Allowing incompatible RC uses in this neighborhood would cause serious permanent harm to the character of the entire National Register District.



*Rev. E. Meany House - Side (South) Elevation*

## 18.3.2 Specific District Recommendations

### *Summary of Recommendations*

The following represents a brief summary of recommendations for the Rev. E. Meany House Historic District.

**Table 18-1**

### **Summary of Recommendations - Union Street Historic District**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Observation/Recommendation</i>
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintain historic setbacks and the relationship of the building to the site</li><li>• Preserve historic identity and character of the existing building; retain historic scale, massing, materials, siting, character and details</li><li>• Encourage double-hung windows with vertical orientation, with pane design to match existing</li><li>• Encourage wood for replacement doors and windows</li><li>• Maintain historic porch elements (see text)</li><li>• Use wide trim material around fenestrations</li></ul>

## Streetscape/Landscape

- Preserve historic wood siding
- Do not allow exposed concrete masonry or metal or vinyl siding
- Keep lighting simple and attached to the structure
- Discourage skylights and utilities visible from the public right-of-way
- Maintain RC zoning
- Carefully evaluate additions for conformity and compatibility with the historic building

- Maintain and enhance parkway treatments; encourage grass and other "soft" materials, discourage pavers or other impermeable treatments
- Maintain street trees
- Do not allow automobile parking in the Pleasant Street parkway
- Preserve and maintain historic cast iron street lamp
- Discourage fencing at the front or side yards
- Use landscape to enhance (not cover) historic resources

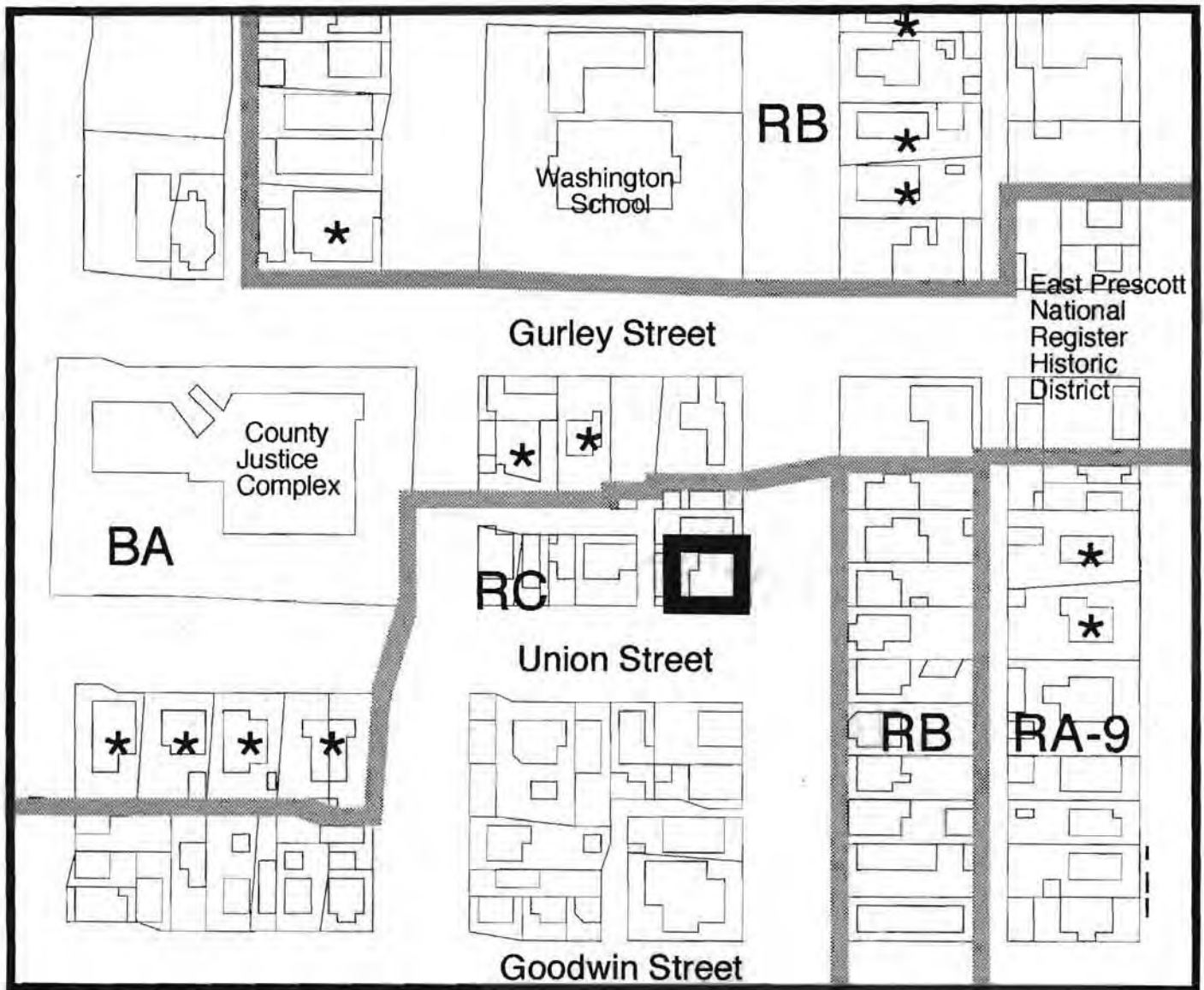
## District Opportunities

- Encourage continued use of the Meany House as professional offices while retaining the historic residential character
- Monitor development pressures that could occur from Gurley Street; monitor variance and zoning change requests in the area
- Discourage uses that require a significant increase in automobile traffic and parking
- Disallow incompatible uses in the historic district (see East Prescott Historic District)



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# HISTORIC PRESERVATION MASTER PLAN



	Local District Boundary
	Property Listed on the National Register
RA-9	Residential A-9
RB	Residential B
RC	Residential C
BA	Business A

Figure  
18-1

Rev. E. Meany House  
Prescott Historic Preservation District  
District Boundary & Zoning  
Not to Scale