

MEMO FOR: HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS

Arthur M. Miller
120 Dickman Dr. SW
Ruskin, FL 33570-4649

THROUGH: Department of Development
Coordination
ATTN: Leslie DeWitt
POB 1110
800 Twiggs St.
Tampa, FL 33601

15 July 87

REFERENCE: DR. A. M. MILLER'S REQUEST TO REZONE FROM RESIDENTIAL
TO SPECIAL PROJECT INTEREST (Historical)-HC, in RUSKIN, FL

1. The Request Mrs. Willard D. (Julia) Miller and her son, Dr. Arthur McA. (Mac) Miller, wish to rezone their residence at 120 Dickman Dr. SW in Ruskin from residential to SPI-HC, to formally recognize the historical value of the residence and property, to assure that future alterations to the basic historical structure will preserve its character, and to legally provide for operating a Bed and Breakfast establishment of between two and four rooms.

2. Neighborhood Support Owners of nearby residential properties have no objection to this rezoning. Some, indeed, have offered active letters of support. Rezoning the Miller property to SPI-HC would have only a positive impact on the neighborhood, as the property is entirely insulated from other residential property on the northwest, west, and southeast by the Ruskin Inlet, and is bounded on the south and east by a mixture of commercial and residential lots. The Miller house is, in effect, in a cul-de-sac where Dickman Dr. SW (a shell and sand road) meets the Ruskin Inlet.

Being a rather exclusive operation, a Bed and Breakfast would draw only a few cars each day. These would enter and leave by the property's north yard, the one to which access is entirely through commercial property--with the exception of one lot owned by the family making this request. Parking is adequate, with a large circular waterfront drive,

Several area homeowners feel that a special districting for the Miller property would help raise official awareness of this area. Such awareness would perhaps avoid errors in building, and in enforcing zoning code violations--such as the one which recently allowed construction of a manufactured and trailer-like residence in the R-1 area immediately south of the Miller property.

3. Historical Interest of the Home The Captain A. P. Dickman house, known familiarly as Ruskin House, was built in 1911 and is the first multi-story home in south Hillsborough County built of finished lumber. It housed one of the four founders of Ruskin, which began as an intentional community devoted in part to the ideals of the British educator and critic of art and society John Ruskin, who died in 1900. An enthusiast of Ruskin's ideals, Dr. George McA. Miller, grandfather of the present petitioner, participated in

several earlier Ruskins (in MO, TN, IL, and GA) before bringing his ideals and his brothers-in-law, the Dickmans, to found Ruskin, Florida. Dr. Miller was president of Ruskin College, and, along with the Dickmans, first formed the Commongood Society which lasted in Ruskin as a legal entity until its dissolution in 1967, when the remaining commongood lands were deeded to Hillsborough County. A portion of these lands froms the waterfront of the property at 120 Dickman Dr. SW, which has been continuously occupied by the Dickman and Miller families since 1911.

This house forms the northern point of a quarter-mile triangle of three historic residences. "Captain" A. P. Dickman's nickname was earned by his piloting the Kilcare on two-day runs between Ruskin and Tampa. His wife, Rosetta Dickman, "Aunt Rose" to all, was the young community's chief hostess.

Captain Dickman's house is the oldest, followed by L. L. Dickman's home, built in emulation of the home designed by George Miller's wife, Adeline. Her design was copied from John Ruskin's idealization of a Swiss chalet. The president's home, now the Ruskin Women's Club, is on the National Register of Historic Places. The A. P. Dickman house (the subject of this petition) is already on the Florida Master Site File, and application is pending to the National Register.

In an early day, the A. P. Dickman home was Ruskin's social center. It not only housed a major founder of the community, but also served as his office for land development. Before the days of hotels in this part of the county, it was, in effect, the guest home for visitors who knew, as an early brochure put it, "All Roads Lead to Ruskin." Families with high-school or college-age children were especially attracted to the new community, as parents who owned land here also could get their children an education financed by the student's own work-study efforts.

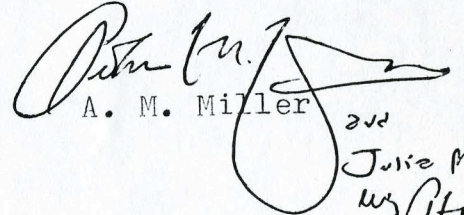
4. Keeping a Community Tradition In the early days of Ruskin, Captain A. P. Dickman and Aunt Rose kept a fine home known for its hospitality. Although Ruskin College closed with the draw-down of young men during World War I and the death of its founder soon after, the cooperative spirit of Ruskin College and the hospitality of Aunt Rose live on in the memories and the ideals of the home's current owner, Dr. A. M. Miller, who has just completed a manuscript titled "John Ruskin's American Utopias." This traces Ruskinite social experiments from Ruskin, Missouri (home of the Dickmans), to Ruskin, Illinois (in Glen Ellyn), over to Ruskin, Tennessee (west of Nashville), thence to Ruskin, Georgia (south of Waycross) and fianlly to Ruskin, Florida. Dr. Miller is active in literature and local history, and is currently administering a summer grant designed to uncover even more firm evidence of Hernando DeSoto's first encampment in 1539 at the mouth of the Little Manatee River near Ruskin.

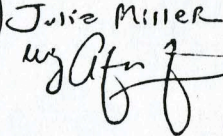
5. Bed and Breakfasts, an Overview Known as "B&B's" for short, Bed and Breakfast establishments are an ancient continuing tradition in Europe, particularly in England. They are not hotels, nor are they "lodging houses" in the American mode; they are homes. A typical British B&B is a relatively humble affair which delivers

exactly what it promises--a place to sleep and a morning meal. They also tend to deliver the flavor and history of the country and its people. American B&B's have capitalized on this fact; they are still homes, but a conscious effort is made to present the homes as special. Many American Bed and Breakfasts are historically important homes rescued from misuse and financial distress by enthusiastic proprietors. The amenities of American B&B's are often fairly gracious, and relatively affluent travellers with an eye for local history often prefer them to hotels.

The Miller family would like to keep the history and hospitality of the Captain A. P. Dickman house alive by rezoning the home and land to Special Project Interest-HC,

Thank you for your consideration,


A. M. Miller


Julie Miller

enclosures:

Property description
site plan
plat of town
letter from Mary McCahon
letters of support



MARY M'CAHON

Architectural Historian

10 July 1987

The A. P. Dickman House is one of the most architecturally and historically significant houses in the county. It was identified by the 1980 Historic Tampa/Hillsborough County Preservation Board's indepth survey of cultural resources in the unincorporated portion of Hillsborough County as "the finest eclectic dwelling in the county." Built in 1911 for one of the four founders of Ruskin, the house combines the asymmetrical massing, varied roof silhouette and distinctive 3-story corner tower that recall the late 19th-century picturesque tradition of the Queen Anne with the handsome, double-tiered, columned gallery and well-preserved interior detailing of the Colonial Revival. Such eclectic styling is well represented in urban houses but is unusual in the county. Although there have been some 1950s alterations, most are reversible and are minor in comparison to the high percentage of the original fabric, both interior and exterior, that survives.

The architectural significance of the house is matched by its historical importance. Ruskin was founded in 1908 by A.P., L.L., and N.E. Dickman and their brother-in-law Dr. George M. Miller, grandfather of the current owner, as a utopian community dedicated to higher education for the working class. A.P. Dickman's house, which also served as his real estate office for selling parcels to settlers who shared John Ruskin's utopian philosophy, is the oldest extant building in Ruskin. Of the three remaining buildings associated with Ruskin's founders and the significant pre-World War I history of the socialist community, it is the only one still owned by direct descendents of the original families.

The A.P. Dickman House is listed in the Florida Master Site File maintained by the Florida Division of Archives, History, and Records Management, and, in my professional opinion, appears to meet the criteria for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (application in process) for its architectural and social/humanitarian significance.

Mary Elizabeth McCahon

Mary Elizabeth McCahon
Architectural Historian

17 Quorn Hunt Road West Simsbury, Connecticut 06092.
(203) 658-7749

2812 N. Central Avenue Tampa, Florida 33602
(813) 223-4290

JUN 26 1987

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THIS INDENTURE, Made this 17th day of June 1987

by and between Julia M. Miller presently of
120 Dickman Drive S.W.
Ruskin

OFF. 5152 P.G. 642
REC.

of the County of Hillsborough, in the State of Florida
33570
party of the first part, and

Julia M. Miller & Arthur McA Miller, as
joint tenants with the right of survivorship

whose post office address is: 120 Dickman Drive, S.W. Ruskin
of the County of Hillsborough, in the State of Florida
parties of the second part,

WITNESSETH: That the said part of the first part, for and in consideration of
the sum of Ten (\$10.00) ----- Dollars,
and other valuable considerations, lawful money of the United States of America, to her
in hand paid by the said parties of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby ac-
knowledge, has granted, bargained, sold and conveyed to the said parties of the
second part, their heirs and assigns forever, all of the following described
land in Hillsborough County, Florida, to-wit:

From the Southwest (SW) corner of Lot 400, as shown on
MAP OF RUSKIN CITY as same is recorded in Plat Book 5,
Page 75, Public Records of Hillsborough County, Florida
run North along the west boundary of said Lot 400 a dis-
tance of 22.26 feet: run thence N. 46° 50' West a distance
of 154.67 feet: run thence West a distance of 27.10 feet
to a POINT OF BEGINNING: run thence North a distance of
145 feet; run thence North 61° 45' West a distance of
108.23 feet; run thence South 21° 46' West a distance of
211.20 feet along the Eastern line of Ruskin Boulevard;
run thence East a distance of 173.65 feet to POINT OF
BEGINNING. Same being known as: Tract F. of A.P. Dickman
Tract.

RICHARD L. AKE
CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Documentary Tax Pd. \$ 50

Intangible Tax Pd. \$ 0

Richard L. Ake, Clerk Hillsborough County

By: R. Ake Deputy Clerk

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the above described premises, with the appurtenances, unto
the said parties of the second part, their heirs and assigns, in fee simple forever.

And the said party of the first part does hereby covenant with the said parties
of the second part that said described property is free from all liens and encumbrances

And the said party of the first part does hereby fully warrant the title to said
land, and will defend the same against the lawful claims of all persons whomsoever.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the said party of the first part has executed this deed
under seal on the date aforesaid.

Signed, sealed and delivered
in the presence of:

Julia M. Miller (SEAL)
JULIA M. MILLER

1987 JUN 18 PM 1:57

87143955

MEMO FOR: BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

July, 1987

FROM: FRED V. BARTELS
126 3d Ave S.W.
Ruskin, FL 33570

REFERENCE: REQUESTED REZONING OF THE MILLER PROPERTY AT
120 DICKMAN DR. S.W., RUSKIN, FL

I own the property adjacent to the lot next to that referenced above, now zoned residential. I understand that the Miller family, living at 120 Dickman Dr. S.W. in Ruskin, wishes to rezone its property (Special Interest Historical District) to recognize the historic importance of the home.

Rezoning the Miller property to a historic classification would most likely increase the value of this neighborhood. We welcome this opportunity to recognize the historical value of our area of south Hillsborough County.

Fred V. Bartels