

Maidenberg gone but not forgotten

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Frank Maidenberg, a community pillar who literally helped shape Marion, died Saturday in Colonial Oaks Health Care Center. He was 97.

Born in Marion on Nov. 2, 1914, Maidenberg devoted his life to the city.

His son, David, said he remembers his father driving around Marion on Saturday mornings to look at properties and projects he was interested in at the time.

“He was always talking about Marion,” he said. “He cared about it passionately.”

Alan Miller, former executive editor of the Chronicle-Tribune and current director of university relations at Indiana Wesleyan University, said Maidenberg was one of his “true heroes in the Marion community.”

He said when he first came to work at the Chronicle-Tribune in 1964, his editor told him to call and make arrangements to talk to Frank Maidenberg about the city.

“He was a man of great vision,” he said. “He dreamed of things years before they happened.”

Miller said Maidenberg was talking about a paved path along the Mississinewa in the 1960s long before the Riverwalk became a reality.

Judy Fitzgerald, managing member of Maidenberg Real Estate Services, said Maidenberg “loved Marion completely.”

“People who know Frank know he’s a loving, kind and generous person,” she said. “He was just so much about the community.”

David Maidenberg said his father never lost faith in downtown Marion, where he had his office in the former Iroquois Building that stood where STAR Financial Bank is now located.

“He was alive and active when the downtown was thriving,” he said. “He thought downtown was still the heart of the city.”

Miller said Maidenberg was not only instrumental in setting up the Marion Housing Authority, he also served as its first president. Maidenberg was also among the group of local leaders that helped form the Marion Philharmonic Orchestra.

“People laughed at the thought of it when he started it in the ’60s,” Miller said. “He was a great

supporter of the arts in general.”

Through his real estate company that still bears his name, Maidenberg also helped form Warehouse City and brought Holiday Inn and the movie theater into town.

Fitzgerald said Maidenberg was still coming into the office until about four or five years ago. She said Maidenberg died “peacefully and with dignity, just as he lived his life.”

“He’s just one of a kind,” she said. “If you knew Frank you loved him.”

David Maidenberg said his family will have a small burial service to honor their father. He said later in the spring or summer they will have a bigger memorial service for people around the community and county to pay their respects and memorialize him.

“He was born here, raised his family here and died here,” he said. “In many respects, he was a personification of the heart and soul of this city.”