

MINUTES

BOARD/COMMISSION: Historic Preservation

DATE: 09/21/17

MEETING: Regular

CALLED TO ORDER: 6:59 p.m.

QUORUM: Yes

ADJOURNED: 8:58 p.m.

LOCATION: Glen Ellyn History Center

MEMBER ATTENDANCE:

PRESENT: Chairman Marks, Commissioners Christiansen, Darga, Loftus, Vavra, and Veum-Welsh

EXCUSED: Commissioner Dieter and Manak

ALSO PRESENT: Associate Village Planner Purvis, Trustee Senak, Glen Ellyn Historical Society Executive Director Hall, Glen Ellyn residents, and Ramsey Historical Consultants

1. Call to Order

Chairman Marks called the Glen Ellyn Historic Preservation Commission regular meeting to order at 6:59 p.m., in the Glen Ellyn History Center at 800 N. Main Street, Glen Ellyn, Illinois.

2. Public Comment

None

3. Approval of August 17, 2017 Meeting Minutes

The Commissioners reviewed the draft minutes of the August 17, 2017 meeting. No changes were suggested. Commissioner Loftus moved to approve the minutes of August 17, 2017. Commissioner Christiansen seconded, and the motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

4. Old Business

A. Preservation Brochure

The Commission provided feedback regarding the layout of the brochure which will be handed out to realtors, builders and architects to provide examples of new

construction and remodels that exemplify the character of Glen Ellyn. The Commission suggested additional homes that should be included in the brochure and provided some language for the captions below the photographs. The Commissioners were in favor of adding some additional photographs to the back panel of the brochure.

Staff Liaison Purvis stated that she will make the updates to the brochure and have a final draft for the Commission to review at the October 2017 meeting.

5. New Business

A. 2017-2018 Architecture Resource Survey

Lara Ramsey of Ramsey Historical Consultants provided the Commission with an overview of the Architecture Resource Survey (ARS) and what to expect over the coming months. She described the boundary of the survey extending roughly from the Village's western boundary to Park Blvd. between Hill Ave. and Turner Ave. in the north and Roosevelt Rd to the south. This area of the Village is mid-century, post war in period with many structures from the 1920's. The ARS will consist of a reconnaissance survey to locate significant and potentially significant structures. Photographs of the properties will be taken in mid-November to provide the least obstructed view of the properties. Each property owner will receive a standard letter informing them of the ARS and that someone will be in the neighborhood photographing and documenting details about the structures. Additionally each home owner will receive a house history form that they can submit if they have any historic details about their property. Police will be made aware of the proposed activities and provided with license plate numbers for each of the field surveyors.

Following the reconnaissance survey a more intensive survey will be conducted citing more complete information about the significant and potentially significant properties which will include permit research. The consultants will compile a report which will be completed within the grant cycle (approximately August of 2018). The report will include photographs of all of the properties within the boundary of the survey, the house history forms, significance ratings for each property and a summary of the results of the ARS.

Commissioner Loftus asked if the Village could get an extra copy of the ARS report to keep in the library. Staff Liaison Purvis responded that she thinks this is feasible, and will look into it.

After Ms. Ramsey completed her description of the ARS, Chairman Marks asked her if there are any communities in the Chicagoland area that are combatting teardowns with success. Ms. Ramsey replied that teardowns tend to follow the market. The better the market, the larger the numbers of teardowns versus renovations and

remodels. She suggested that the best way to preserve homes is to have local Historic Districts. She also stated that this is difficult to do without community support. She described a couple of tools that some communities use to delay demolition of homes but emphasized that community education is the key to gaining support. Property rights are important and there can sometimes be a perceived restriction to preservation efforts. The Commission expressed a desire to be more assertive and recognized that more educational meetings are needed in order to gain support. Some of the education could and should be focused on the brokerage community – providing them with information about preservation incentives such as the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency’s tax freeze.

The Commission discussed some of the incentives other communities have available. For example, Elgin has a grant program in place available for the rehabilitation of historic homes and the City of Chicago offers permit fee waivers for historic homes.

Commissioner Vavra suggested that the first step to educating the public is letting them know that they have something significant. Then letting them know what incentives are available for preserving their significant property. Commissioner Christiansen stated that framing the conversation as incentive based is important. She also stated that she would like to further investigate a demo-delay ordinance.

The Commission discussed preservation easements, an incentive created by National Trust and Landmarks, Illinois. The easement provides protection for the structure which keeps it from being demolished and is recorded with the property. The home owner is given a tax break, but the value of the structure would be reduced at the time of sale, due to the limitations on the property.

A member of the audience, Steve Conrad spoke about the recent demolition of the house on Hill Avenue. He stated that he photographs historical houses throughout the Village, many of which have been torn down. He passed around some of the photos he has taken. The Commissioners commented on and discussed the photographs.

Commissioner Loftus suggested that the demolition report the Village provides each month does not accurately document the earliest permit for the construction of the home. His concern is that this becomes public record. Staff Liaison Purvis stated that the report comes from the information the Village has in its file system, while earlier records may exist, there is not staff available to locate that information and enter it into the Village’s record system. The information provided is the best information that the Planning and Development Department has available at this time.

Trustee Liaison Senak stated that for many people it is a matter of economics. He provided that if the Commission can rally a culture around preservation then maybe the Village Board will act in accordance with that culture. He offered to look into the

possibility of offering owners of landmarked homes an incentive like the downtown façade award that provides a certain amount of matching dollars from the Village for the repair of downtown buildings.

Commissioner Darga suggested that a Historic Preservation impact fee could be attached to the cost of demolition of significant properties.

The Commission discussed a brochure that was put together by the Citizens for Glen Ellyn Preservation, the Village of Glen Ellyn Historic Preservation Commission and the Glen Ellyn Historical Society. The brochure outlines many of the programs available to recognize and protect historically significant structures.

The Commissioners suggested that the brochure would be a helpful tool for educating the public. Trustee Liaison Senak suggested that the Commission put together a budget for printing and mailing the brochure to see if the Village can fund it. He stated this would be a good way to start to establish the culture of preservation.

B. Events

The Commission continued to discuss ways to educate the public about the benefits of preservation. It was suggested that perhaps the Commission could host an event in the month of May, Historic Preservation Month. Some of the ideas for an event included: a mini bus or trolley tour of Historic Main Street or a historic house walk featuring the top 100 most significant homes in Glen Ellyn. The Commission suggested that event ideas should be brought forth for discussion at the next meeting. Trustee Liaison Senak suggested that the group develop a budget for the event to propose to the Village Board and stated that time is of the essence as the Village Board is currently discussing the budget for this year. Each Commissioner agreed to come with ideas to the October meeting and to bring estimates of cost for their proposed event.

The Commissioners asked about setting up a small sub-committee for event planning. Staff Liaison Purvis stated that she will make sure that this is not a violation of the Open Meetings Act and will get back to the Commission at the next meeting.

C. CLG Wins

The Commission provided some examples of CLG wins to Staff Liaison Purvis. These will be submitted to the IHPA to be included in their new publication. Two suggestions for the publication were the Lake Ellyn Boathouse and the property on the northwest corner of Prairie and Hawthorn. Chairman Marks and Commissioner Loftus agreed to work on this project together and provide additional examples.

6. Chairman's Report

None

7. Trustee Liaison's Report

Trustee Liaison Senak provided some updates regarding the new developments that are going into the old Soukup's building. The Commission had questions regarding the review process for any exterior alterations on the buildings within the Historic District downtown. Staff Liaison Purvis provided that the National Register Designation does not require any review unless federal funds are being used for the project.

Trustee Liaison Senak provided an update about the sidewalk going in on Turner Avenue near Ben Franklin School and discussed some of the upcoming changes proposed at Taft and Roosevelt Road to make the intersection less dangerous.

8. Staff Report

None

9. Confirmation of Next Meeting Date and Adjournment

Chairman Marks stated the next meeting will take place on Thursday, October 19, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. at the Glen Ellyn Civic Center.

With no further business, Chairman Marks asked for a motion of adjournment. Commissioner Vavra motioned for adjournment, and Commissioner Christiansen seconded. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Submitted by: Kelly Purvis, Staff Liaison