

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE  
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN REVIEW BOARD  
VILLAGE HALL - COMMITTEE ROOM  
801 BURLINGTON AVENUE

FEBRUARY 15, 2017, 7:00 P.M.

Chairman Pro tem Larson called the February 15, 2017 meeting of the Architectural Design Review Board to order at 7:00 p.m. and asked for a roll call:

**PRESENT:** Chairman Pro tem Larson, Ms. Chalberg, Mr. Lerner, Mr. Riemer

**ABSENT:** Chairman Davenport, Ms. Acks, Ms. Hollweck

**STAFF:** Senior Planner Rebecca Leitschuh and Planner Scott Williams

**VISITORS:** Kathy and Tom Nybo, 5253 Blodgett, Downers Grove; Chris Gumm-Sexton, 6001 Pershing, Downers Grove; Amy Gassen, 5320 Benton Ave., Downers Grove; Rich Kulovany with Friends of the Edwards House, 6825 Camden, Downers Grove; Lois Sterba with Downers Grove Historical Society; Michael Matalis, 4500 Florence, Downers Grove; Chuck and Byron Holtzen, 5226 Carpenter St., Downers Grove; John Palis, 5314 Victor St., Downers Grove; Christine Martin, 701 Maple Ave., Downers Grove

**APPROVAL OF JANUARY 18, 2017 MINUTES**

**MOTION BY MS. CHALBERG, SECONDED BY MR. RIEMER TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 18, 2017 MINUTES, AS REVISED. MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE OF 4-0.**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**A. 17-ADR-0001: A petition seeking a Historic Landmark Designation for the property commonly known as 5099 Fairview Avenue, Downers Grove, IL (PINs 09-09-502-002 & -003). The property is the train station located at the intersection of Fairview Avenue and Burlington Avenue. Village of Downers Grove, Petitioner and Owner.** Planner Scott Williams thanked the historical society and Friends of the Edwards House for doing the research on this petition. Mr. Williams reviewed the site on the overhead, noting the surrounding character of the area which included four sides of commercial use. A history of the Fairview Train Station followed noting it was constructed in 1890 by Mr. Victor Fredenhagen as part of the Fredenhagen Subdivision started in the 1850's. Mr. Fredenhagen would draw people to the village by offering them free train rides and milk (he operated a dairy farm) to get them to purchase land and develop in the village. The station that is being landmarked replaces that of the original station built in 1890.

A diagram of the Fredenhagen Subdivision plat (dtd. 1886) was placed on the overhead by Mr. Williams, followed by a more current plat which reflected a village street named after

Mr. Fredenhagen. Historical images of the station were referenced, noting it looked like a cottage with its high gambrel roof and masonry construction. A canopy was added later in 1916.

Viewing a current photograph, Mr. Williams noted that not much has changed except for the canopy overhang. He did point out the multi-model aspects depicted in the current photograph: the train, cars in the commuter parking lot, the parking meter, and the digital update of the train schedule. Mr. Williams stated the station was a gateway to the community. Other interesting facts shared about the station included the ticketing agent who lived on the second floor until 1977 and served coffee and other sundries; the fact that the station was located in two of the village's special downtown zoning districts, which resulted in a second downtown arising around the station which would not have happened without it being there. Lastly, he referenced a photograph of the plaque from the historical society which summarized that residents at the time wanted the train station/cottage to portray the rural image that the community wanted to convey at the turn of the century.

Mr. Williams reported how the structure met the standards for approval under Section 12.301A and B of the village's Historic Preservation Ordinance and the fact that the station celebrated its centennial birthday last year. Staff recommended that the ADRB submit a positive recommendation for landmark status of the Fairview Train Station.

Questions followed as to what was the status of the second floor currently, wherein Senior Planner Leitschuh stated it was not being used currently but that it still resembled the original apartment. She further confirmed the station was owned and maintained by the village and the basement still contained a large boiler. Asked if there were any prior plans to replace/enlarge the station, Ms. Leitschuh indicated there were no such plans and given that it was part of the Fairview Concentrated Business District, under the village's current comprehensive plan and draft update, the focus was to continue to develop mixed use development around the station and for it to be a second unit of a downtown corridor. Ms. Chalberg believed some opportunity existed to add more investment in the building's trim, new paint on the trim, along with additional landscaping to make it more attractive.

Chairman Pro tem Larson opened up the meeting to public comment and swore in those individuals who would be speaking.

Ms. Kathy Nybo, 5253 Blodgett is a member of the Friends of the Edwards House. She also assisted in the Main Street station landmarking application and stated that once that application was completed she decided to do the Fairview application with the assistance of many others. For this application, she said not much information existed on it as compared to the Main Street station, which she felt actually benefited the station. She thanked the village and the railroad "for not messing with it." Ms. Nybo commented on the difficulty it must have been for the ticketing agent to sleep there with the trains passing through, how many commuters traveled through the Fairview station over the past 100 years, and the happy and sad memories made there. She emphasized the station has been a "faithful servant" for the past 100 years and it needs to be recognized.

Ms. Lois Sterba with the Downers Grove Historical Society (DGHS), read the wording that would be on the historical plaque for the Fairview Station.

Ms. Chalberg pointed out that in 2016 the DGHS did choose the Fairview Station as their historical site for the year which coincided with the village's landmarking of it. A dedication ceremony will be planned when the plaque is installed at the train station.

Mr. Rich Kulovany, 6825 Camden Rd., shared some of his memories of the station, being that he grew up three blocks away from it. He elaborated on the various businesses that were operating near the station at that time (early 1960s) and the time he spent selling newspapers inside the station as well as his observations of the time.

Mr. Michael Matalis, 4500 Florence, Downers Grove, believed the station was not only a historic asset but an economical asset. He pointed out that while a few other villages had to set up dedicated parks for train enthusiasts, the village did not have to. Mr. Matalis discussed some of the rich railroad history of the village, the delivery of Sears homes to the area, and the general economic income that results from the train enthusiasts that come to the area.

Ms. Amy Gassen, 5320 Benton Ave., stated both she and her husband thanked everyone who researched the Fairview Station and commended the village for going through the application process. She hoped this encouraged other government entities to do the same.

Mr. John Palis, 5314 Victor Street, Downers Grove, said he moved to the village to be near a train station and the village had three stations. He was not a proponent of saving something for the sake of saving it. He voiced concern that there were many train stations and the upkeep of the Fairview station could be substantial. While he supported keeping the station he was concerned about energy and progress and whether energy or technology improvements could be made to the building or whether the maintenance would be limited. He did support improving the immediate area with landscaping.

Chairman Pro tem Larson believed that if the application was recommended for landmark designation, he envisioned that energy improvements such as those discussed above would be discussed with the council. However, he stated that landmarking does protect the building from being torn down. Ms. Leitschuh clarified that the entire building will be landmarked but only the portions of the building facing a primary street will be considered. In this case, the north façade and the Fairview facade would have to be reviewed more closely if improvements were to be made to those facades. She elaborated on how the replacement of windows would be considered as well and explained that the building's interior could receive insulation because the preservation ordinance did not affect its interior.

Mr. Joseph Lemay, 1912 Hitchcock Avenue, Downers Grove, also grew up watching the trains pass through the Fairview station. He is a locomotive engineer for the railroad now and supported the preservation of the building for future generations, possibly inspiring future engineers and train enthusiasts. He commended the commissioners.

Hearing no further comments Chairman Pro tem Larson entertained a motion.

**MR. RIEMER MADE A MOTION THAT THE ADRB FORWARD A POSITIVE RECOMMENDATION TO THE VILLAGE COUNCIL TO RECOMMEND HISTORICAL LANDMARK DESIGNATION FOR 5099 FAIRVIEW AVENUE.**

**MR. LERNER SECONDED THE MOTION. ROLL CALL:**

**AYE: MR. REIMER, MR. LERNER, MS. CHALBERG, VICE CHAIR LERNER**  
**NAY: NONE**

**MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 4-0**

**B. 17-ADR-0002: A petition seeking a Historic Landmark Designation for the property commonly known as 4836 Middaugh Avenue, Downers Grove, IL (PIN 09-07-211-015). The property is located at the northwest corner of Middaugh Avenue and Franklin Street. Patrick and Christine Sexton, Petitioner and Owners.** Mr. Williams reviewed the architectural features of this 1893 two-story home, located at Franklin and Middaugh. The home is a Gabled-Ell with Queen Anne characteristics. A photo of the original home was depicted, with staff noting the projecting gables facing each street and the Queen Anne characteristics, i.e., steep pitched roofs, wood clapboard, wood bargeboard and elaborate porches with spindle work.

Per the Historical Society, the home's first family was the Chilvers family from 1893 to 1898 and Mr. Chilvers was known to be a volunteer fireman on the first Northern Volunteer Fire Brigade and was a trustee who publicly voted down a pay raise requested by a policeman. He was also scammed by a "gold finding machine."

Photos of the current home were depicted on the overhead with Mr. Williams pointing out the projected gables, the screen porch (dating from 1900s), the original stone foundation with a wheel (design feature), wood scaling at the peak and double-hung windows. He noted that a particular feature he was able to photograph on-site included the second-story corner windows with cornice brackets, which was a unique feature. Another picture reflected the new portion of the home, dating from the 1930s. Mr. Williams shared photos of the home's interior – the original fire place including original decorative tile, wood etching around a doorway, and the corner window from the interior's perspective.

Staff recommended approval for landmarking since the structure and addition were more than 50 years old and the architectural style was Gabled-Ell with Queen Anne characteristics.

Chairman Pro tem Larson added that the home is located on a brick street and he enjoyed the interesting Halloween themes that the owners put on display. He found the building interesting, specifically with the wrap-around porch. The home was well maintained.

Petitioner, Ms. Chris Gumm Sexton thanked Cindy Zaeske (historical society) who helped her with the home's research. She shared that she and her husband lived in the home since 1983 but in 1989 she noticed a woman in a car that would park by her house. She came to find that the woman in the car stated her grandfather built the home and his last name was Winter. The woman also lived in the home with her grandparents when she was a child. Ms. Sexton invited the woman into her home who provided some background on the home, such as the back of the home was an addition and the kitchen was not there but there was the dining room, living room and the parlor (with fireplace) and that the upstairs had remained the same in the front.

Ms. Sexton stated the woman started corresponding with her in 1989 and gave her much information about her grandparents and that her grandfather had built the home. However, through research, it was determined he had purchased the home in 1903 and lived there after the

Chilvers. Originally, she thought it was the Winters' home. Ms. Sexton shared that the woman's correspondence discussed the wonderful memories she had in the home as a child and sent her old photographs of the home as well as photos of her grandparents and extended family. Ms. Sexton asked whether it was required to call the home the Chilvers home when, in her mind, it was the Winters House since the Chilvers built it but only lived in the home for five years, whereas, the Winters spent time in the home from 1898 to 1944, until the owner's death.

With regard to the name, Ms. Chalberg explained that from the Historical Society's perspective, the society preferred to have the original owners or builder as the name of the house. However, the village could choose to do it differently. Regarding the letters, Ms. Chalberg suggested holding onto the originals, or, place them in a file permanently with the museum where files were kept on landmarked homes.

Regarding the fireplace, Ms. Sexton stated it was grandiose with its relief pictures and pastoral scene and, after some research, she found the tile was created by William Galamore for Trent Tiles of Trenton, New Jersey, where the company produced such relief tiles from 1890 to 1910. She elaborated how beautiful the fireplace tile really was. As to the corners of the home facing Franklin and Middaugh, Ms. Sexton reported there was some work that still needed to be done on a half wheel configuration and they were in the process of doing that work. She wanted to fix that prior in hopes to not come before the board. However, Ms. Leitschuh explained that she would need a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for the work.

In discussing the corner detail, Ms. Sexton believed the detail was original. She explained that in the fret work there were holes in it that indicated to her there were some form of dowel rods to hold the detail. Someone pointed out that it could be somewhat seen in the original house photograph. Because it was a change to the home's exterior, Ms. Leitschuh stated that Ms. Sexton would have to return to the board.

Lastly, Ms. Sexton provided some personal comments about the Cashell (phonetic) homes that were being constructed next to her property.

Mr. Reimer?? appreciated the additional historical information and photos provided by the petitioner. He supported scanning the letters and them being part of the record. However, per staff, a permanent paper file and digital file of the material submitted with the application was kept.

Asked if Mr. Winter was a trained engineer, Ms. Sexton reminded the board that when the woman moved there she was 4 or 6 years old and was basing it off of that recollection. She also said her grandfather participated in the construction of the train station but Ms. Sexton had no knowledge of that. Ms. Leitschuh clarified for Ms. Sexton that she will choose the wording for her landmarking plaque. Again, Ms. Sexton asked for board input, recalling that the woman was so passionate about the home that she wanted to give the Winter family credit.

Board member suggestions included having a different plaque for the Chilvers family or having both names on the plaque using a hyphen.

Ms. Cindy Zaeske, 1130 Franklin St. recommended the home for landmarking status since it was "a gem" amongst a very changing street. It was a "wonderful gift the owners were giving the village." Ms. Zaeske provided a brief history about the Chilvers family who arrived in

the early 1800s and lived in Barbers Corners for a bit, which was Bolingbrook. The Chilvers moved to Downers Grove and Mr. Chilvers constructed many homes in the village. The Chilvers then moved from this home to a corner home on Saratoga, where Mrs. Chilvers lived until she died. The Chilvers' son also lived on Middaugh, and possibly built the prairie-style home a block down. Ms. Zaeske also shared the story about the policeman in more detail. Ms. Zaeske, personally felt that the Chilvers may have hired Mr. Winters to work for him which was why the woman may have thought her grandfather built the home because he was a woodworker and Chilvers constructed homes. Per Zaeske, Mr. Winters may have rented the home for a while from Chilvers. As for the train station, Ms. Zaeske also shared some insight into the letter that was written by the woman.

Ms. Christine Martin, 701 Maple Ave. also has a landmarked home and was thrilled the owners were landmarking their beautiful home. She felt it was important due to the rapid changes occurring in neighborhoods now. She supported naming it the Winters House.

Ms. Amy Gassen, 5320 Benton Ave., thanked the Sextons for making the decision to landmark their home and protecting it for the future. She noted their home was recently recognized by the Downers Grove Historical Society and Museum's Historic Home program. Last comments were that while the historical society preferred the original owner's name to be on the plaque, Ms. Gassen explained there were exceptions, including the name she used for her own home. She also recommended that the owners put "circa" on their plaque unless there is a definitive document stating when the home was constructed. Lastly, she supported all of the research and documentation that was done on the home but stated that type of information was not required for landmarking a home.

Mr. Rich Kulovany, 6825 Camden, for Friends of the Edwards House, commended the Sextons for seeking landmarking designation and preserving the home for future generations. He loved the history that came out during these meetings and agreed it was not required to prove the exact date of a home, just that it was 50 or more years old. Finally, he added that with the new Historic Preservation Ordinance, homeowners were free to rehab the interiors of their home. He explained the reasons windows and doors were included in the ordinance was because they were more complex and human intervention was necessary. He asked the board to consider the request.

**MR. LERNER MADE A MOTION THAT THE ADRB FORWARD A POSITIVE RECOMMENDATION TO THE VILLAGE COUNCIL TO RECOMMEND HISTORICAL LANDMARK DESIGNATION FOR 4836 MIDDAGH AVENUE.**

**MR. RIEMER SECONDED THE MOTION. ROLL CALL:**

**AYE: MR. LERNER, MR. REIMER, MS. CHALBERG, MR. LARSON**

**NAY: NONE**

**MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 4-0**

**NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Leitschuh recalled at the last meeting there was some questions from the public and staff about a couple sections of the Historic Preservation Ordinance and what does it mean when

a building is landmarked. She explained that when a building is landmarked it is the entire building that is landmarked but not the property it sits on unless during the nomination process staff identifies specific things that can be historic on the property. Examples followed. While the entire building is landmarked, she explained the ordinance calls out that it is the primary façade that is the portion that comes in for a Certificate of Appropriateness, typically. She read the definition for a primary facade and cited an example.

Citing another example of whether the demolition of part of a building occurs, which is not a primary façade, would it have to come before the board, Ms. Leitschuh stated it did not require being seen by the board. However, if an addition was being added, it would have to come before the board to ensure that it met the criteria. Ms. Leitschuh proceeded to explain the three different levels of review and how a case would trigger a review by the board or just staff.

Mr. Lerner explained that his interpretation of the preservation ordinance was same as staff's, commenting his question on a petition last month had to do with whether the outside basement entrance would be counted as part of the primary façade and be protected. To him it would be because it was visible from the street and met the formal definition from the code.

Other questions followed on what occurs with a demolition by natural causes and whether something like that would come before the board, wherein Mr. Williams read from the ordinance that a COA would be needed prior to reconstruction. Certain life safety changes, however, did not require a COA. Mr. Riemer also pointed out that one could apply for an economic hardship.

**A. Review Sample of Architectural Style Brochure** – Ms. Leitschuh referred to the first brochure (out of 4 brochures) that was put out to the public discussing the village's historic preservation program. The second brochure, entitled "Architectural Styles – What is your Home?" was a group effort between staff, the board, the historical society and the museum. A summary of how the brochure was created followed. Ms. Leitschuh reported the brochure's focus will be on two distinct styles – the true architectural style, or, "high style" of a building as well as the vernacular building type. As an example, she explained that a Mid-Century Modern would be the architectural style; the Ranch would be the vernacular form of it. Examples within the brochure were explained and why they were added to the brochure. Ms. Leitschuh pointed out the two purposes of the brochure were to be 1) a resource for property owners potentially interested in landmarking their property; and 2) a resource for people who just love architecture and history.

Staff asked for feedback on the brochure and asked to proof the text portion, time permitting. Mr. Lerner offered to take feedback comments via email and combine them as one for staff. Overall, positive comments followed regarding the brochure. She stated that if members knew of other architectural examples in the village, to let her know as soon as possible.

Questions/comments followed regarding the brochure's final format and it being a resource for realtors. Per staff, the brochure was on the village's web site. It was suggested to add a brief explanation of what is true architectural style and what is vernacular building type. Last comments included removing those styles that depicted only one example within the village.

Discussing the next two brochures, Ms. Leitschuh stated staff's goal was to get a draft to the board members of both brochures by the April meeting – one to include the Sears Home tour

and the other to include the Downtown walking tour. Examples of the Sears home brochures – current and from 2007 -- were handed to members. Ms. Leitschuh said the updated brochure will have the same text but included the updated surveys and updated pictures.

Regarding the Downtown Walking Tour brochure, Ms. Leitschuh presented on the overhead various photos of buildings she wanted to include in the brochure. Members were asked to provide feedback and to email her by February 24<sup>th</sup> if they want to include other buildings. Ms. Leitschuh walked through those buildings she felt important for the brochure. Asked if staff was looking for historic pictures or before and after photos for these buildings, Ms. Leitschuh shared her dilemma and asked for guidance. She stated she liked showing the current state of a building and comparing it to prior.

Other structures that Ms. Leitschuh thought could be interesting to add to the brochure were some apartment buildings around town but she was not sure to include just one or multiple pictures. Ms. Chalberg offered to assist her. Asked if the board was comfortable with staff featuring structures that were not consistent with their integrity as to what was original or should the brochure feature structures that were truly pure to their architectural intent, Ms. Chalberg indicated that regarding the historic homes, the brochure was featuring homes that still had some of the architectural integrity on two or three sides yet changed how a home looks overall. She would have to review the samples to see how altered a structure has become.

Mr. Larson suggested adding points of interest to the walking tour and listing what important events may have occurred at a site. Ms. Chalberg suggested that Ms. Leitschuh contact Sarah Konzen and Ashley Grude for more information and input.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Rich Kulovany, 6825 Camden Rd., as chairman of the Friends of the Edwards House, announced he had the agenda for the March 11, 2017 Chicago Suburban Preservation Alliance meeting, which starts at 9:30 a.m. at Avery Coonley School. Members of the ADRB were invited to attend. Agenda topics and speakers were shared. Mayor Tully will be presenting the Certificate of Landmarking for the Pierce Downer Home in the afternoon meeting.

Ms. Amy Gassen, 5320 Benton Ave., Downers Grove, provided an update on her Four-Square initiative. She stated she and Ms. Leitschuh met with Karen Robbins, the GIS mapping specialist for the village, who will be assisting in the project and will be getting the village's Four Squares on the Historic Resource Application GIS map on the village's web site, along with better photographs. She also stated the Downers Grove Historical Society was sponsoring another American Four Square presentation for April 5, 2017, 7:00 PM at Emmett's. ADRB members were invited and asked to spread the word about the presentation.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**MR. RIEMER MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:15 P.M. MR. LARSON SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE OF 4-0.**

/s/ Celeste K. Weilandt

(As transcribed by MP-3 audio)