

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
AND
AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEE ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION
PUBLIC WORKS – LUNCH ROOM
5101 WALNUT AVENUE

SEPTEMBER 16, 2015, 6:30 P.M.

Chairman Pro tem Davenport called the September 16, 2015 meeting of the Architectural Design Review Board and AdHoc Subcommittee on Historic Preservation meetings to order at 6:33 p.m. and asked for a roll call:

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

PRESENT: Chairman Pro tem Davenport, Members Mr. Casey, Ms. Englander, Mr. Riemer

ABSENT: Chairman Matthies, Mrs. Acks, Mr. Larson

AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEE ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

PRESENT: Chairman Behm, Members Mr. Birch, Ms. Gassen, Mr. Geocariss, Mr. Jarosz, Mr. Zimolzak

ABSENT: Mr. Leitschuh

STAFF: Deputy Village Manager Mike Baker and Planning Manager Stan Popovich

VISITORS: John and Kathy Hebert, 802 Maple Ave., Downers Grove; Don Richards, 4735 Main St., Downers Grove; Mr. Philip Shaw, 5117 Brookbank Rd., Downers Grove; Mr. Mark Thoman, 1109 61st St., Downers Grove; Mr. Rich Kulovany, 6825 Camden Rd., Downers Grove; Ms. Melissa Nyssen 900 59th St., Downers Grove; Mr. Scott Lazar, 808 Maple Ave., Downers Grove; Ms. Peg Knight, 1101 Maple, Downers Grove; Mr. Gordon Goodman, 5834 Middaugh, Downers Grove; Chuck and Byron Holtzen, 5226 Carpenter St., Downers Grove

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – AD-HOC SUBCOMMITTEE – SEPTEMBER 2, 2015

THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 2, 2015 AD-HOC SUBCOMMITTEE ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION MEETING WERE APPROVED ON MOTION BY MR. JAROSZ, SECONDED BY MS. GASSEN. VOICE VOTE:

**AYE: MR. BIRCH, MS. GASSEN, MR. GEOCARIS, MR. JAROSZ, MR. ZIMOLZAK,
CHAIRMAN BEHM**

NAY: NONE

MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 6-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – ADRB – SEPTEMBER 2, 2015

THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 2, 2015 ADRB MEETING WERE APPROVED ON MOTION BY MS. ENGLANDER, SECONDED BY MR. RIEMER. VOICE VOTE:

AYE: MR. CASEY, MS. ENGLANDER, MR. RIEMER

NAY: NONE

ABSTAIN: MR. DAVENPORT

MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 3-0-1

DOWNERS GROVE ORDINANCE – REVIEW TERM SHEET

Chairman Behm reviewed the powers and duties charged to each of the two committees by the Village Council. He reviewed the general duties and responsibilities of the Subcommittee and felt that both Boards were working with each other and proceeding to meet those duties and responsibilities. Asked if the two committees felt they were on task, general comments from the groups were positive and that they should focus on Goal No. 2.

In response to some questions, Mr. Baker handed out a term sheet that was focusing on narrowing down some of the ideas and concepts that may make their way into a draft ordinance. The draft ordinance would come at the next meeting. Mr. Jarosz had hoped to see a draft ordinance from village staff along with the ordinance from the Downers Grove Families for Sensible Historic Preservation in order to compare the two since some good recommendations were made in both documents.

After discussing the matter, it was decided to follow staff's lead and expand the term sheet to cover Goal No. 2 and the district idea. Mr. Baker explained how the term sheet was created in order to "capture" what the two committees had been discussing over the past meetings, finding common themes, and then becoming more specific. Details followed.

Key Proposed Changes to the Historic Preservation Ordinance

Addressing Key Proposed Change No. 1, Mr. Popovich asked for consensus whether a permit was needed on window and door replacements. A hearty discussion followed. Chairman Behm circled the discussion around and asked both committees if they agreed that if someone wanted to replace a window or door and the opening size did not change or affect the structure, did the applicant need a COA? If the door/window was the same size, the only concern Ms. Gassen voiced was would the replacements work with the character of the home? It was then brought up that the two committees would give leeway to siding, roofing and other elements, and if they were going to impose requirements for windows to include divided lights, etc., the committees had to be careful and consistent – remembering that the committees already discussed keeping structures versus making them historic and decreasing the loss.

The conversation then turned to someone removing a double-hung window and replacing it with glass block, wherein it was noted that was the very reason for the review process. But then it was brought up that a public hearing/notification process would have to take place. Dialog

followed that the windows/doors issue was minor compared to other aspects and if the two committees felt it was important for someone to review the windows and doors as it relates to the character to the home, then it should be important. Asked if changing the windows or door, or even the type of siding could affect a building's historic significance, some members thought it could. Mr. Casey mentioned the concise marketing piece that the City of Moline used for its landmarking.

Because so much time was spent on this topic, dialog followed that staff would take a straw poll of the members on each of the 13 Key Proposed Changes and if there were not objections, staff would move forward or make minor modifications.

Key Point No. 1 – No objections. Move forward.

Key Point No. 2 – No objections. Mr. Jarosz clarified that this applied to exterior improvements only. Members agreed to use standard language either found in other ordinances or use a graphic to depict the 90 degree angle suggestion, as suggested by staff. Move forward.

Key Point No. 3 – No objections. Move forward.

Key Point No. 4 – No objections. Staff will make minor revisions. Move forward.

Key Point No. 5 – No objections. Move forward.

Key Point No. 6 - No objections. Staff will research other codes. Move forward.

Key Point No. 7 – No objections. Move forward.

Key Point No. 8 – Ms. Englander noted that the provision is subjective. Staff noted in other situations, neglect is handled through the village's property code maintenance. A suggestion was made to refer to the village's property code maintenance and remove Key Point 8 all together.

Key Point No. 9 – No objections. Move forward.

Key Point No. 10 – No objections. Move forward.

Key Point No. 11 – No objections. Move forward.

Key Point No. 12 – No objections. Move forward.

Key Point No. 13 – Mr. Popovich introduced the idea of creating a sliding scale for approval based on the number of consenting property owners. Mr. Riemer suggested 100% consent would be less controversial. Mr. Casey suggested leaving it at 51% and the change should be made based on only one instance of a district being considered. He noted district may be a long way off.

Mr. Davenport noted that if it was changed to 100% it may appear that districts are not a priority. He noted he had no problem with the current ordinance. Chairman Behm noted it is hard to get a district but how do you make people comfortable with a district, 100% would make people comfortable. Ms. Gassen brought up the possibility of a non-contiguous district, but noted it would need to be thematic, i.e. all Four Squares or all Sears (kit) homes. Mr. Popovich confirmed a thematic district could not typically include various style homes in one thematic district. Chairman Behm noted the controversy with the 51%, while Ms. Gassen noted with 100% it may not increase the likelihood of a district being created. Chairman Behm noted the 100% gives people an opportunity to participate if they choose, but if they don't want to participate they don't have to.

Members agreed to remove Key Point 13 and instead require 100% consent for a historic district.

Key Proposed Changes to the Administrative User-Fee Schedule

Key Point No. 1 – Dialog followed to eliminate the words “offset the impact of eliminating filing fees” and for staff to review the incremental increase in demolition fees and determine how it would affect the preservation efforts. Move forward.

Key Point No. 2 - No objections. Move forward.

Key Proposed Changes to the Application and Review Process

Key Point No. 1 – No objections. Move forward.

Key Point No. 2 – No objections. Move forward.

Key Point No. 3 – No objections. Move forward.

(The committees took a five minute break at 7:50 pm; reconvened at 7:55 pm)

Public Education and Awareness Strategies

Per Mr. Baker, if there was concurrence with the strategies it would be turned into a work plan.

Strategy No. 1 – No objections. Move forward.

Strategy No. 2 – No objections. Move forward.

Strategy No. 3 – No objections. Move forward.

Strategy No. 4 – No objections. Move forward.

Strategy No. 5 – Mr. Jarosz noted this item shouldn't be a priority right now and wondered how to define areas for new surveys. Overall, no objections but to add “continue to complete/update/revise” surveys. Move forward.

Strategy No. 6 - No objections. Move forward.

Strategy No. 7 – No objections. Mr. Geocar is suggested coming up with a hash tag for historic preservation in the Village. Move forward.

Strategy No. 8 – No objections. Move forward.

Strategy No. 9 – No objections. Move forward.

Strategy No. 10 – No objections. Move forward.

Strategy No. 11 – No objections. Ms. Gassen suggested the plaque be presented to the property owners at a Village Council meeting. Move forward.

Strategy No. 12 – No objections. Move forward.

Strategy No. 13 – No objections. Add anyone who does a “decent” rehab on a structure, new construction that matches what is in the neighborhood. Glen Ellyn has four categories. Move forward.

Strategy No. 14 – No objections. Move forward.

Strategy No. 15 – No objections. Move forward.

Strategy No. 16 – No objections. Move forward.

Strategy No. 17 – No objections. Add design guidelines as a resource. Chairman Behm suggested that members keep in contact with those surveyed property owners who expressed

interest in the possibility of landmarking their properties. A discussion ensued about what to say to those property owners and how to keep them interested. It was noted it would need to occur quickly so no time or momentum is lost. Mr. Davenport suggested sending interested parties a summary of what has been discussed by the Village. Move forward.

Incentive Strategies

Strategy No. 1 – No objections. Move forward.

Strategy No. 2 – No objections. Move forward.

Strategy No. 3 – Chairman Behm suggested “historic” improvements not only in districts, but throughout the Village to create character. Mr. Casey inquired about maintenance and how Special Service Areas have been used in the past. No objections. Move forward.

Strategy No. 4 – No objections. Move forward.

Strategy No. 5 – No objections. Staff was asked to clarify what was meant by a rebate program. Move forward.

Dialog followed regarding the earlier comment about disincentive where someone who wanted to demolish a building would have to pay a higher fee to do it and possibly think twice about demolishing it. However, in talking through the matter, Chairman Pro tem Davenport believed there was a “gray” area that existed and it could be a potential “tool” used for unintended purposes in terms of control from the village side.

Members discussed the reasons why someone would purchase a property only to demo the structure, i.e., the land was more valuable or the structure had the same value as the land. Mr. Davenport reminded everyone that increasing fees does not affect a builder when constructing a new home, wherein, it affects the owner who is adding on to his or her structure or remodeling a home.

Mr. Jarosz suggested an increase in demolition fees for new construction only. Mr. Zimolzak suggested an increased fee on demolition of historic properties, but the discussion was had about what would constitute a historic property. Just a surveyed property or a listed property. Talk of a having a two-tier fee structure for full teardowns and partial teardowns was suggested as was discussion about the village staff having a list of the “vulnerable” structures within the village, similar to Landmarks Illinois and the National Trust. Mr. Jarosz suggested contacting the various preservation organizations and the community and asking them for their top 10 vulnerable buildings in the village. The information could then be compared, publicized, and promoted, thereby educating the community and creating less discourse when the next “Edwards” house came up. Mr. Davenport noted there isn’t a precedent for that to occur, as the Plan Commission doesn’t go out and solicit comments. Mr. Geocariss suggested engaging middle and high school students in debates about preservation, getting them to talk and to talk about it at home.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Behm opened up the meeting to public comment and stated five minutes would be allowed for each person.

Mr. Philip Shaw, 5117 Brookbank Rd., welcomed historic preservation. He shared how his own father took him and his siblings to historic places when they were younger. He learned five standards about historic preservation from a professor. The subject property represents: 1) the first of its kind; 2) the last of its kind; 3) the best of its kind; 4) is associated with a famous figure; and 5) something historic happened at the site. He stated the committees were discussing public policy on private property and he recommended members to use the five standards, pointing out the Edwards House may have been 100 years old but age was not stated in the five standards. He said the village may have to catch up to acquire one of the five standards for historic preservation. He also reiterated many resources were available to the members and what the public needed was less administration.

Mr. Gordon Goodman, 5834 Middaugh, believed that Key Point No. 7 under “Changes to the Ordinance” was a good recommendation which he supported. He believed the village wanted to reduce the amount of procedure in the committees’ plan yet emphasize the benefits and objectives of historic preservation programs that the village wanted to sponsor. As to Key Point No. 12, he thought it was very innovative to have non-contiguous historic districts but believed a descriptive theme was necessary to identify them. He agreed with the suggestion for D.5. to continue to revise and update the historic building surveys but stated that once they were updated, they should be used. Mr. Goodman distributed copies of the provisions in the village’s current ordinance relating to granting a demolition permit, noting the permit can be granted on the basis of either a site restoration plan or following the first review of a construction plan. He cited the Edwards House as an example and believed that for historically significant buildings that have been identified through the village’s survey it was not appropriate to grant a demolition based on the fact that the building should no longer be located on the site. He hoped the two committees would revise the criteria for granting demolition permits based on the fact that buildings have a historic significance and are to be replaced by another significant building unless they are of public danger. Lastly, under E.3 Incentive Strategies, Mr. Goodman suggested looking at Geneva’s ability to accept private party donations and make certain improvements towards historic structures. Examples followed, noting it gives people a sense of participation.

Mr. Scott Lazar, 808 Maple Ave., appreciated the discussion about the 100% voluntary preservation combined with the non-contiguous approach and believed it would create much interest in the community. He believed there was an opportunity for interest and progress. Mr. Lazar asked the committees to have exceptions in the ordinance based on health and accommodation for those with disabilities.

Mr. Rich Kulovany, 6825 Camden Rd., appreciated the committees’ work and supported the 100% vote. Regarding education, he believed it would be good to get the high schools involved by having debates or essay contests and getting their families engaged.

A note from Melissa Nyssen, 900 59th Street, who could not stay for the meeting, was read by Ms. Gassen. Ms. Nyssen supported having a delay period for demolitions especially if the home was historic. Alternatives could be explored, such as moving or buying it for a set period of time. Ms. Nyssen supported having a significant demolition fee for viable historic buildings.

Other topics discussed included that the definitions for contiguous and non-contiguous districts should be better defined other than just a “theme” for non-contiguous districts, i.e., a kit home versus a Sears home.

In closing, Chairman Behm recommended that the committees read the draft ordinances they were given either by staff or other entities and to review them, comment on what they like/dislike and send them to Mr. Popovich. Dialog followed on how staff would move forward with the draft ordinances previously discussed or supplied, the terms sheet, the input received tonight and what may have not been discussed.

A member asked Mr. Popovich how preservation ordinances address lead paint, asbestos, etc. and ADA requirements, wherein Mr. Popovich said there were no special standards for single-family homes since it was a federal regulation. However, it was suggested that the Moline document, which addresses some of those concerns, be sent to all members and staff.

ADJOURNMENT

MR. ZIMOLZAK MOTIONED TO ADJOURN THE AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEE ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION MEETING AT 9:00 P.M. SECONDED BY MR. GEOCARIS. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE OF 7-0.

MR. RIEMER MOTIONED TO ADJOURN THE ADRB MEETING AT 9:01 P.M. SECONDED BY MS. ENGLANDER. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE OF 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Celeste K. Weilandt
Celeste K. Weilandt
(As transcribed by MP-3 audio)