

Citizens for Glen Ellyn Preservation Meeting Minutes of Thursday, March 4, 2010

Attendees:

Linda Gilbert, Eleanor Saliamonas, Mike Wilson, Jim Page, Tim Loftus, Cam Page, Liz Dawson, Ian Dawson, Jeff Gahris, Chris Wilson

Treasurer's Report:

Eleanor Saliamonas reported there have been no donations this month arriving at the PO Box. \$100 is on deposit with the Village for room rental for the April 1st event. \$250 damage deposit and \$100 rent deposit is with the Park District for the rental of the boat house for CGEP house walk. The cost for stationary and postage for the end of year donation drive came to \$354.85 leaving money in the bank at \$4337.05

Membership's Report:

Chris Wilson, Membership chair, reported current paid up membership stands at around 97 based on the core set of data from Excel spreadsheet that has been migrated to the MySQL membership management database. Auditing activity is now underway. Once the data scrub is complete the new software will be enhanced to add functionality to identify and trigger membership renewal letters for past due members and the software will make it much easier to maintain member details going forward. Question arose over whether we should extend the report functionality of the new software to print end of year report on individual donations. CGEP already sends letters for tax exempt purposes after donation has been made. Linda and Eleanor took action item to look at procedures to get individual donation details from the Quicken tool used currently by CGEP for financial tracking. Through this program, it is hoped that paid-up memberships will return to 300 to 400.

G. E. Historic Commission Update:

Tim Loftus reported the Glenbard West District 87 school board turned down the request to consider landmarking the building. The Lake Ellyn park and WPA-built boat house (actually a warming house) has also long been considered as desirable for land mark status and next stage landmarking attempts for the HPC is still in committee. The planned CGEP May newsletter will have half devoted to educating readers about landmarking and the other half on tree preservation. Additional support includes using the boat house as a first stop in the October CGEP Historic Homes Tour.

Verizon Wireless wants to put up antenna in the Civic center clock tower. The material around the clock face will be replaced with RF transparent materials. Initial documents had not given specifics of material and the drawing showed solid material unlike how clock face is trimmed currently. VZW additional information showed more detail and the materials will be able to be painted and should look no different to how clock face looks today.

Downtown planning committee has been approached to look for opportunities for EDC, ARC and HPC to work together to implement the down town plan and to interactively start to address some of the issues for the downtown planning commission such as looking at retrofitting buildings for energy efficiency. Downtown planning commission has also visited seven different villages (including Highland Park, Geneva, La Grange, Wheaton, Batavia) to study how these villages operate and what might make sense for Glen Ellyn.

Historical Society is having problems keeping up with the loan payments to pay back the debt to the Village in relation to the history park. Due to a significant reduction in income, HS is having problems making things work and the plan could be scaled back if assistance from the village is denied. \$1.4m was used to buy the collection of properties at 5 corners; with one parcel to the west of Stacy's Tavern donated. Even when paid off, the Village will continue to own the buildings. Discussion will take place at the Finance Commission level as to whether the debt will be forgiven, reduced or other concessions given.

At HPC meeting Village Trustee Ladesic brought up that the CGEP-produced landmarking brochure should be made available at the Village (permit desk). Ladesic plans to take the topic back to the village board and wants to promote the brochure. Corinne at Coldwell Banker has offered to hand out this brochure to new owners of vintage homes. The brochure was placed at the history center but was soon after thrown out. Tim Loftus will look into placing them there again, with an agreement that they remain, given the cost to us. Linda Gilbert will drop some off to place in the reception area of the village offices where there are already other brochures.

Village Board Update:

Cam Page reported the Riford Road sidewalk installation project is going ahead. After public input the sidewalk will be re-routed to save more trees. The number of trees that will be lost has been reduced from triple digit to around 60 and smaller trees only and a 100 year old oak tree is now being saved.

Contractor registration is not going to be about collecting complaints about contractors, although it could be used to deny registration to contractors with serious complaints against them. It will however generate revenue. Contractors will have to show proof of insurance.

On the downtown plan the Village Trustees have compiled a list of things they'd like to see (and priorities) and many can be accomplished without changing the down town plan.

From the Plan commission, the Reno center (Public Works property) need zoning variation to build 62ft antenna to allow radio signals to signal to potable water production facilities and will save \$19,000 per year spent for the phone lines currently used to serve this purpose.

Coyote trapping is over for the time being. Glen Ellyn took different approach to Wheaton with regards tackling recent coyote problems. Glen Ellyn's activity was a limited period

study and six coyotes were trapped, five were in poor health (with mange) and euthanized. Wheaton on the other hand is putting down traps which are harmful or fatal to the animal if caught (or anything else that comes into contact with the traps).

Crescent Blvd concept study is going to cost \$44,000. The results of the study will be used to apply for grants (federal funds) to help offset the costs of resurfacing Crescent if it can be proven that the work would improve safety at the school. Eleanor Saliamonas commented that this large expenditure is reasonable evidence of the village's intention to support the High School's extensive plans for the area.

2010 Historic House Tour Update:

Liz Dawson reported house tour planning was off and running. It is confirmed the Lake Ellyn boat house will be used as the orientation center for guests to pick up their tickets and packages at the start of the house walk. A meeting with the publications committee had been held the week prior and the design considerations for the tickets, flyers, posters, yard signs, etc, is now underway and we are most fortunate to have O'Connor Design doing the design work. Next up is the house selections committee meeting and that team will be meeting shortly to start the house selections process. We have many houses (16 so far) which have been nominated.

Cool Cities Update:

Jeff Gahrns reported that he and the Cool Cities coalition have started to shoot the video to promote Cool Cities which will feature a LEED-certified green business as well as the District 89 green initiatives. With regards the Dark Skies sponsored joint meeting between Cool Cities and CGEP planned for April 1 Jeff and Linda will be meeting to work on the PR plans for the event. Can we get an advert on the e-newsletter that goes out from the Village as well as the drive by message board by the train tracks? Plan is to also get an article in the local Trib.

Tree Protection Ordinance:

Linda Gilbert alerted everyone that the amendments to the Tree Protection ordinance are coming onto the agenda of the Environmental Commission meetings (April meeting). The Village staff wants to drive EC on what they want looked at. Village staff expressed opposition to the amendments. CGEP members are encouraged to attend. There is opportunity to improve what we have rather than cut back these property-rights friendly amendments. Staff will be looking at implementation and what it is going to cost. Initial implication was that it would be cost-prohibitive. However, this concern is exaggerated since much of it could be built into existing permit process. The Forester already inspects every lot associated with construction/demolition. However, where homeowners are cutting down a tree, it is not practical to be able to look at every lot. Tree companies already have to be registered with the Village and could be made aware of the permits needed to make

sure the right trees are coming down. Protected varieties of healthy trees in the setback would require that the owner or tree company seek a variance. This would need to be streamlined. Property owner rights are already regulated in the setback. Regulations apply to builders as property owners themselves rather than treating builders as nonresident middle men. This creates the loophole whereby builders clear-cut before applying for building permits since no trees are considered protected in the current ordinance. Even then, the permit process only requires orange fence protection of trees the builder agrees to protect when applying. To make it more confusing, the builder still may cut down the trees designated protected, since protection is strictly voluntary. The current ordinance language is also vague as to protection of trees on neighboring properties and therefore there is confusion over what is needed when village staff visits construction projects.

National and State Rehab Tax Credit Legislation

Tax credit reform legislation is pending at both the national and state levels. This would be excellent for our downtown. These bills would make it more desirable for owners to rehab their buildings and would work in addition to the energy tax breaks that can be obtained. The bills are also redefining the definition of an old building (now those built up to the 1950s as opposed to builds prior to 1930s). CGEP board sent a letter to US Representative Roskam to ask him to act as a co-sponsor for this. The letter was handed to him by the Landmark IL group along side a group of letters collected by Landmark IL. Village manager and Village President are also aware of these bills. Linda Gilbert wrote Mark Pfefferman, asking that the village express support. He expressed some interest and will contact the village attorney to find out if the village can do this. She also asked trustee Thorsell to write, given her background as an architect and conviction that the downtown should be an historic district. She agreed and sent a letter. Linda sent an eblast to the membership asking them to write. Everyone is encouraged to write letters to their representatives – see CGEP website for summaries on each of these bills.

Other:

The very large metal structure that has appeared over the tracks close to Park is a signal bridge. It is designed to make rail traffic more efficient and the goal is to have the crossing gates down 11% less, based on current traffic levels. Finley Road is the next signal bridge East and there is another one West of the downtown. This was initially to be placed at Main Street but village manager, Steve Jones, interceded and it was pushed further east. Plan is to increase rail traffic with the addition of a 3rd track. Two tracks will be used for commuter trains and one for freight. Plan is to increase the parking in Zone E by around 1500/1800 spaces (cost sharing between Village and Metra). 8-12 more trains on a daily basis. Trustee Thorsell asked for figures on the projected increases but has yet to receive them.

Dates to Save:

Thursday, April 1, CGEP/Cool Cities sponsored presentation on light pollution and what communities can do to have safer, more attractive lighting. Executive directors of Illinois Coalition for Responsible Outdoor Lighting will be the presenters, starting at 7:30pm at Glen Ellyn Civic Center, Clayton room. Refreshments served.

Next Meeting: Thursday, April 1st, 2010 at 7:30 p.m (see above for details of this joint meeting with Cool Cities).