

Citizens for Glen Ellyn Preservation Meeting Minutes of Thursday, September 3, 2009

Attendees:

Linda Gilbert, Liz Dawson, Kathy Cornell, Barbara Dutton, Cam Page, Jim Page, Carolyn Schatz, Thomas Waters, Janiece Waters, Zowie Bingham, Vrinda Bingham, Lee Marks

As the Treasurer, Secretary and Membership Chair were not present, these reports will be given at the next meeting.

Linda Gilbert reported that the **Festival of the Arts** was again a positive experience for CGEP. Preservation, landmarking and restoration materials were handed out and board members and active CGEP volunteers had the opportunity for one-on-one contact with members. Two new memberships were purchased and a page of emails was added to our contact list. Window restoration contractors were sought after by a few different visitors. Linda will contact Deb O'Connor for sources she mentioned at the event. The coloring activity for children, again provided by Corinne from Coldwell Bankers, went well, allowing parents a chance to chat with CGEP volunteers.

Village news & issues:

Cam & Jim Page reported that due to lack of business, recent Plan Commission meetings have been cancelled.

Lee Marks mentioned that there is still no solution with the **Yalding House**. Trustee Ladesic did not find a source for a used trailer. Lee is pursuing advice on outdoor storage of the house. Lee also reported that the landmarking proposals for the High School and Lake Ellyn Park & Boat House have been held up for the Village for almost 4 months due to their concerns regarding an intergovernmental request and the problematic nature of the synthetic turf issue at West. Lee mentioned that the ordinance for the Historic Preservation Commission does allow the commission to pursue landmarking without first going to the Village. He plans to address this with Village President Mark Pfefferman.

Another problem regarding village commissions is the difficult path historic homeowners and their architects must take to make changes or build additions on these properties. At times, the most historically sensitive way to make repairs or add modern features to these houses requires a variance. Lee Marks cited frustration at a recent **Zoning Board of Appeals** meeting when the owners of the Benjamin Gault house on Main St. were trying to add a historically correct garage to the property. A garage siting that would have been highly inappropriate for the streetscape would not have required this zoning change request. Lee felt that the members of the board were not at all understanding of the good intentions of the owners and their architect, and made it especially difficult for them. He stated that unlike the many variance requests for new construction, "...every historic building should be considered a hardship." He plans to address this during his meeting with Mark Pfefferman.

Linda mentioned similar situations in other efforts by historic homeowners who are trying to make these homes more livable for modern families while preserving original architectural elements. Last year, the CGEP board had come out in support a request for a variance for a turn-of-the-century home at 542 Hillside. This occurred because the architect had come directly to us. Her concern was that if the small variance was not granted, the homeowners would then be forced to gut the first floor, which would destroy the historic integrity of the interior spaces. The variance was granted. In light of this example, it was agreed that CGEP should try to get more involved in the early stages of these efforts.

Park District:

Linda strongly recommended members attend Park District Board meetings from now on, given the recent vote against video-recording. Eleanor Saliamonas, CGEP board member, will be attending whenever possible and providing a brief synopsis to the board of issues discussed that relate to historic buildings and open spaces held by the PD. Kathy Cornell mentioned how important it is to educate the PD board about the positive value of preservation. Linda expressed concern about the potential for an inappropriate “renovation” of the Boat House. She recommended that the Village Historic Commission keep close watch on what is being proposed for the façade of this beloved historic building.

Other:

Vrinda Bingham suggested that we look into more online resources, including a presence on sites like Facebook. She mentioned www.goodsearch.com that is a search engine that gives not-for-profits a penny per search.

Janiece Waters gave a brief update on the synthetic turf issue at **Glenbard West**, and in the Chicago area. The Lincoln Park efforts have not let up. Linda mentioned that the CGEP board voted not to take a position on this issue since, even though environmentally hazardous, it is not necessarily within the CGEP mission of preserving the character of the village. The 60 foot lights and sound system to be installed at Memorial Park were discussed. Although homeowners to the east of the park have not organized against this, Janiece reported that condo owners on Park have become very alarmed. Vrinda Bingham asked if this lighting would be appropriate for the historic character of the village. Linda acknowledged this dilemma; however, since it is the goal of CGEP to promote the landmarking of the historic school and its idyllic setting, the board has so far decided to stay out of the fray.

October 7 is a scheduled presentation by the Village on the results of the latest historic resources survey. Owners of houses identified as significant in this survey have been invited to come to learn about the reasons behind this effort. CGEP board members plan to attend and will provide the recently published brochure on the forms of landmarking available to Glen Ellyn property owners.

Next Meeting: Thursday, October 1 at 7:30 p.m.