

**VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
MARCH 9, 2011**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

The Regular Meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission (“HPC”) of the Village of Lake Bluff was called to order on March 9, 2011 at 7:04 p.m. in the Village Hall Board Room.

Present: Janet Nelson, Chair  
Paul Bergmann  
Robert Hunter  
James LaDuke  
Randolph Liebelt

Absent: Tom Dobbins  
David Kissel

Also Present: Brandon Stanick, Assistant to the Village Administrator (“A to the VA”)

**2. Consideration of the Minutes of the December 8, 2010 Meeting**

Member Hunter moved to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2010 HPC Meeting as presented. Member Bergmann seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

**3. Non-Agenda Items and Visitors**

Chair Nelson noted there was no one present for this item.

**4. Advisory Review Conference for the Proposed Changes to the Landmark Designated Structure Located at 121 E. Sheridan Place (East Elementary School)**

Chair Nelson introduced the item for consideration and noted School District #65 Superintendent John Asplund is in attendance to provide an update regarding the demolition of the East School.

Superintendent Asplund reported the School District is moving forward with the demolition and operations will begin around April 1<sup>st</sup>. The School District is planning to preserve the frontis piece (archway) and reconstruct elsewhere onsite. The School District is currently considering all details associated with the frontis. He noted there will be an Open House for those interested in visiting the East School prior to demolition on March 20, 2011

Superintendent Asplund noted the cost to reconstruct and preserve the frontis piece is \$60,000 and further noted the concern about storage. The School District may seek private funds to reconstruct the archway. A discussion regarding the frontis piece followed and School District Superintendent Asplund noted: (i) the position will have to conform to 60 foot setbacks; (ii) possible installation on the corner of the lot; (iii) landscape plans around the arch and walkway (no lighting).

Chair Nelson noted the HPC would be available to provide support through the zoning review process.

Ms. Mary Collins (217 E. Scranton Avenue), a current member of the Zoning Board of Appeals, advised she can provide a good contact for preservation of the archway if needed. Additionally, she expressed her belief that the demolition of the school appeared to happen under the radar. She expressed her thoughts regarding the matter and noted every other North Shore community has a space for community events and seems like this is a lost opportunity with the school.

Chair Nelson advised of the past HPC meetings concerning this demolition action and also the task force meetings that took place to study other possible uses. Because of the age of the structure and the outdated improvements, the School Board concluded it would be too costly to keep and maintain the building.

Ms. Collins expressed her belief that it is Lake Bluff's loss that it doesn't have a place to provide space for reception type events. The HPC thanked Ms. Collins for her comments and input.

In conclusion, Superintendent Asplund advised the school building, prior to demolition activity, will be used as a training ground for both Police and Fire Departments.

**5. Continuation of a Workshop Discussion Concerning a Historic Preservation Incentive Program**

Chair Nelson reported the HPC Grant Program Subcommittee met at the end of January 2011 and developed a grant program for the purpose of offering financial incentives to home owners for the rehabilitation and preservation of homes designated as certified Lake Bluff landmarks.

As to the VA Stanick provided a brief overview of the certified landmark process and noted the certification of a landmark is voluntary and the process may only be initiated and pursued by the property owner. Each property that receives landmark designation status is eligible for certification although no landmarks have been certified to date. He added any proposed changes to a certified landmark are reviewed at a public hearing by the HPC following the submittal of an application. The decisions of the HPC are binding and may only be over turned by the Village Board following the proper filing of an appeal by the applicant.

Member Bergmann, also a Grant Program Subcommittee participant, noted the reason for the certified status is a quid pro quo approach and noted the certified status would already allow the HPC to review any potential changes being made using Village funds. The home owner would then have more of a commitment to the home.

A discussion followed concerning the ownership qualifier where the applicant must retain ownership of the certified landmark until the rehabilitation is complete. It was the consensus of the group, that due to unforeseen circumstances, some property owners may not be able to comply with the requirement.

Chair Nelson asked if the \$5,000 grant would be worth its value for applicants to pursue. Member Hunter noted the process is not burdensome or complicated and would be worth the home owner to pursue it for \$5,000. Member Bergmann noted owners will be proud to receive a grant to restore their home and banks may perceive this as a benefit.

A short discussion regarding qualifying for the program during an emergency repair and the HPC reached a consensus that emergency repairs, although not approved by the HPC, would still qualify for the program.

In response to a question from Member Liebelt concerning the number of grants for which a homeowner may qualify, it was the consensus of the group that homeowners may participate more than once and receive more than one grant for different projects.

Additional discussion ensued regarding the types of plans and drawings the HPC would like to see from the applicant. The group reached a consensus homeowners should provide schematics to minimize funds going to pay for copies and revisions to the plans.

It was noted by Member Hunter and Member LaDuke that no specific license pertaining to preservation exists for builders or architects.

Member Hunter expressed concern with post-approval changes to the plans should something change during construction and noted many changes that take place address Building Code requirements. As such, he expressed concern with the group's qualifications in reviewing Building Code requirements. Following some discussion it was the HPC's consensus to alter this requirement and specify a clause in the contract between the homeowner and the Village for the grant.

The HPC discussed several mechanisms to fund the grant program. A to the VA Stanick reported that portions of the demolition tax (\$10,000) for single family homes would not be used because it is a General Fund revenue source.

The HPC expressed interest in recommending new funding sources, such as: (i) a \$15,000 tax for the demolition of landmarks; and (ii) a \$20,000 tax for the demolition of certified landmarks. Portions of these taxes would be used to fund the grant program. Several of the Members of the HPC expressed concern for using money from demolished landmarks to fund rehabilitation projects of other landmarks. A discussion of funding sources ensued and Member Bergmann expressed concern for an HPC request at the beginning of each fiscal year being the only source of support for the program. He expressed his opinion that a portion of the each demolition tax collected should assist in funding the grant program. A to the VA Stanick advised the demolition tax is a General Fund operating revenue and is already dedicated to fund Village operations.

Interest was expressed in raising the building permit fees and using the difference to fund the program. A discussion followed and A to the VA Stanick noted building permit fees are a large portion of the Village's general operating revenues as well. Member LaDuke expressed concern for any additional increases in building permit fees.

A to the VA Stanick noted he will report back to the HPC concerning funding mechanisms for the grant program.

#### **6. Staff Report**

A to the VA Stanick provided a brief update concerning the status of the Stonebridge Planned Residential Development. He reported the Village received a petition from Stonebridge Lake Bluff, LLC. to amend the PRD Ordinance by removing the age restriction designation. A brief report of the history of the development followed. Additionally, he reported that the potential purchaser (SunCal, LLC.) will then market the property as an age-targeted community without the legal requirement that residents be 55 or older.

A to the VA Stanick reported recently, the General Assembly amended the Illinois Open Meetings Act concerning opportunities for members of the public to provide comment to public officials and participate at meetings. The Village Board has adopted a policy concerning public comment and stated that all public bodies in Lake Bluff are subject to this policy which requires a separate agenda item for public comment, 15 minutes be allocated each meeting for comment and comments should be limited to three minutes in length. He advised that this is nothing different from the HPC's past practice.

The HPC confirmed the next meeting is scheduled for April 13, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the Village Hall Board Room.

#### **8. Adjournment**

As there was no further business to come before the Commission, Member Bergmann moved to close the meeting. Member LaDuke seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a unanimous voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandon J. Stanick  
Assistant to the Village Administrator