

**VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
July 11, 2018**

APPROVED MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

A Regular Meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) of the Village of Lake Bluff was called to order on July 11, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. in the Village Hall Board Room.

The following members were present:

Present: Paul Bergmann
 Jane Jerch
 Lois Nicol
 Cheri Richardson
 Steve Kraus, Chair
 Randolph Liebolt
 Robert Hunter, Vice Chair

Also Present: Glen Cole, Assistant to the Village Administrator

2. Consideration of the June 13, 2018 Meeting Minutes

Member Richardson noted a correction on page 2 concerning variations necessary for 673 Maple Avenue.

Chair Kraus requested the deletion of an extraneous paragraph on page 2.

AVA Cole noted that the Village Board had waived second reading and designated 673 Maple Avenue as a landmark at its last meeting. He also noted that 673 Maple Avenue was before the Plan Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals at its next meeting for consideration of the aforementioned variation. Member Richardson moved to approve the June 13, 2018 HPC Regular Meeting Minutes as amended. Member Bergmann seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

3. Non-Agenda Items and Visitors

Chair Kraus stated that the Chairperson and Members of the HPC allocate fifteen (15) minutes at this time for those individuals who would like the opportunity to address the HPC on any matter within its area of responsibility that is not listed on the agenda.

There were no requests to address the HPC.

4. Initial Advisory Review – Changes to Exterior Appearance at 548 East Scranton Avenue (Landmarked Property Subject to Advisory Review)

AVA Cole introduced the advisory review process and the subject application.

The occupants of the home, Maria and Jeff McGuire, came forward to address the Commission. Mrs. McGuire described the changes sought, noting that the front two rooms of the house are currently isolated from the remainder of the house. She stated that the changes would allow for a more open and contemporary floor plan within the interior. She also stated that the front door location obstructs movement to the nearby stairwell.

Chair Kraus noted that there were five exterior changes sought to the structure and listed them aloud, including:

- A new wood entry door on the front (east) elevation.
- The removal of the existing entry door and adding a window.
- Replace an existing window with a smaller, half-length window near the interior stairwell. The current window goes below the skirting panel of the stairs.
- Expanding an existing kitchen window to add additional natural light.
- Removing an elliptical window and replacing it with a sunburst design.

Chair Kraus asked the Commission if there were any questions.

Member Jerch asked about the sunburst design.

The McGuire's stated that there were previously shutters in that area that were removed, and that this was the only arched element in the house. They stated that the angle of the ceiling and the eaves make it challenging to maintain.

Member Jerch asked about the proposed window that would replace the entry door on the south elevation and why it would not match the adjacent window.

The McGuire's noted that the adjacent window is much further back from the front facade, about 35 feet, which is obscured by the drawing perspective. Mrs. McGuire noted that the window is set higher as it is a powder room.

Member Jerch acknowledged the difficulties in retrofitting such a historic structure.

Member Bergmann discussed the history of this property as a minister's hotel during the camp meeting era.

Chair Kraus summarized the decision before the Commission and its options in disposing of the matter.

Member Richardson stated that she had reviewed the reasons for landmarking described in the landmark ordinance and found no conflict between them and the proposed changes.

Vice Chair Hunter stated that he sees no changes inconsistent with the nature of the house.

Member Bergmann stated that moving the door is the most significant change, but he does not believe it is a negative. He stated that he is pleased with the changes.

Given the commission's commentary, Chair Kraus asked for a motion to find that the five changes are not inconsistent with the purposes of the Historic Preservation Ordinance and to conclude Advisory Review. Member Richardson made a motion. Member Bergmann seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous roll call vote.

5. Advisory Review Conference – Demolition of Accessory Structures at 700 East Center Avenue (Landmarked Property Subject to Advisory Review)

Ms. Christine DeYoung, occupant of 700 E. Center, came forward to present to the Commission. She noted that the Commission had requested more details at their June regular meeting, and that Member Bergmann had visited their property the previous evening. She presented an illustrative board including photos of the current site as well as a drawing of a proposed new shed. She stated that the structures are below grade and are not historically significant, and described the Village Engineer's review of stormwater drainage in this area as not being obstructed within the Village's system.

At the request of Chair Kraus, Ms. DeYoung described the siting of the new shed on the lot as well as its design and materials. She noted that the shed would not interfere with the nearby tree; would reduce the square footage of storage on the site; and would add green space to the lot.

At Ms. DeYoung's request, Member Bergmann provided a report regarding his site visit the previous evening. From Ms. DeYoung's description in June, it occurred to him that the structures she described may have had dairy uses in the past. He stated that there was no evidence of such uses during his visit, but that there was evidence of concrete pours after 1960 and before 1930. He stated that he concurred with Ms. DeYoung that the architecture was unattractive and, having seen them, he has no qualms about permitting the demolition to continue.

Member Jerch stated she supported reducing impervious surface on this site.

Ms. DeYoung described her attempts to find solutions to the stormwater situation on the site, and that a plumber had concurred with Jim LaDuke's opinion that the best solution would be to demolish the sheds and cap the private stormwater inlet within. She concluded by restating her request to demolish the existing two sheds and rebuild the new shed consistent with the presented drawing.

Vice Chair Hunter asked why the drawing showed the standing seams running in a counter-intuitive direction.

Chair Kraus stated that he had reviewed the standards prescribed in the Ordinance and found no conflict between them and the proposed work.

Chair Kraus requested a motion to conclude advisory review, as the work was not inconsistent with the purpose and goals of the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Member Jerch made a motion. Member Nicol seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous roll call vote.

Chair Kraus requested that the minutes reflect the Commission's intent that the new structure not be considered subject to landmark protection pursuant to the property's landmark designation ordinance.

6. Continued Strategic Planning and Visioning for the Historic Preservation Commission

Chair Kraus asked Vice Chair Hunter and Member Liebolt if they had any comments about their interviews with residents regarding historic preservation. He noted that they had been absent from the Commission's discussion and individual Member reports on this subject at the June regular meeting.

Vice Chair Hunter provided a brief report.

Chair Kraus summarized a handout he provided in the agenda packet which attempts to summarize the HPC's recent strategic planning discussions. He described the document's attempt to form a background and foundation for understanding the Village, and sets of interventions directed towards: people first learning about the Village; people interested in purchasing homes within the Village; and people who are tearing down and constructing a new home within in the Village. Chair Kraus also reviewed the Evanston historic district application as an example of a resource that would further multiple sets of these interventions.

During a discussion of interventions directed towards those tearing down and constructing a new home, Vice Chair Hunter reviewed the materials standards recently proposed by the Architectural Board of Review and reviewed by the Board of Trustees in February.

AVA Cole summarized the discussion among the Trustees on this subject, noting the concern expressed that many homes within the Village would appear not to meet these standards.

From a comment by Member Jerch, the group briefly discussed the concept, raised in the outline, of maintaining a list of recommended architects or builders and alternatives.

Member Bergmann contrasted this desire to outside professional investors seeking to tear down and rebuild speculatively.

Member Nicol discussed the various groups who may tear down a structure and their motivations.

AVA Cole discussed the circumstances necessary for a speculative builder to profit from a tear down and contrasted those circumstances to the intervention points the Commission has today.

Vice Chair Hunter noted that, by the time a design is construction-ready, most of an architect's fee has been realized and requested changes have a direct cost.

At Member Bergmann's request, the group returned to a discussion of the Evanston historic districts application and the work necessary for the Village to realize this. He asked if it was necessary to buy programming assistance or other budgeted resources.

Chair Kraus discussed the next steps for this proposal and asked how the Committee would approach writing a more detailed document. He stated that he did not want to start these efforts until there was a Board-approved master plan for how these efforts fit together.

Member Bergmann asked what the end product of these efforts would look like.

Chair Kraus stated that there would be many different work products and described many of the pieces of information that a prospective resident or buyer could use.

Member Nicol noted that the same information would be useful to people already here as well. A brief discussion commenced.

Chair Kraus stated that he desires two volunteers from the Commission, and moved forward to a discussion of historic surveying.

AVA Cole and Chair Kraus presented the current status of proposal negotiations with Benjamin Historic Consulting for a new round of historic surveying of the Village and the various areas and levels of surveying detail under consideration.

Chair Kraus returned to the subject of next steps for the list of interventions. He discussed the resources available and again asked for volunteers. Members Richardson and Jerch volunteered. Chair Kraus stated that, at the August regular meeting, the Commission could focus the balance of its time on further exploring these conceptual issues and deciding on a path forward.

Chair Kraus asked for a brief report on the concept of heritage lots to conclude the agenda.

AVA Cole described the concept. He stated that there are many narrow lots within the Village that are seen as desirable and worthy of preservation, but which are prohibited by current zoning. He emphasized that the zoning code is not designed to allow lots of these narrow sizes to be built upon, and noted that this was exacerbated by bulk controls introduced within the last 20 years. He expressed that additionally, if any two adjacent substandard lots would come into common ownership, both would lose their grandfathered status under the zoning regulations and would no longer be buildable. He stated, however, that this situation does have the side effect of not allowing many changes to these historic structures. Continuing, AVA Cole stated that an opinion with less consensus - or even opposition - in the Village is that these lots and forms are among the most treasured of homes, but that there is no desire to allow the creation of new 25' buildable lots with new structures.

Vice Chair Hunter noted that these narrow lots are essential to affordability, especially for young families that he continually hears can no longer live within Lake Bluff.

Member Richardson concurred, stating that these are excellent starter homes.

Member Bergmann discussed the need to landmark the remaining narrow camp meeting houses.

7. Chairperson's Report

Chair Kraus had no report.

8. Staff Report

As the meeting concluded, AVA Cole noted that a proposal to subdivide at 419 Prospect Avenue would be before the Plan Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals the following week for variation consideration. A brief discussion commenced.

9. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was duly seconded and passed on a unanimous voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:05p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Glen Cole
Assistant to the Village Administrator