

**VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF
COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 10, 2020**

APPROVED MINUTES OF MEETING

The Village of Lake Bluff Board of Trustees met as a Committee-of-the-Whole (“COW”) in the Village Hall Board Room (40 East Center Avenue) on Monday, August 10, 2020. Village President O’Hara called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

The following were present:

Village President:	Kathleen O’Hara
Trustees:	Barbara Ankenman Regis Charlot Mark Dewart Joy Markee William Meyer Megan Michael, Village Clerk
Absent:	Aaron Towle, Village Trustee
Also Present:	Drew Irvin, Village Administrator Peter Friedman, Village Attorney Steven Kraus, HPC Chair Glen Cole, Assistant to the Village Administrator (ATVA)

President O’Hara said due to the COVID-19 emergency, this meeting will be held primarily virtually. As required by law, at least one representative from the Village is present at Village Hall and the virtual meeting will be simulcast for members of the public who do not wish to view the virtual meeting from another location.

Non-Agenda Items and Visitors

President O’Hara stated the COW allocates 15 minutes for those individuals who would like the opportunity to address the COW on any matter not listed on the agenda.

There were no requests to address the COW.

Discussion Regarding Historic Preservation Regulations

President O’Hara said following the Board’s workshops on March 16 and June 10, 2019 regarding the Village’s Historic Preservation Regulations, Staff, the Village Attorney, and the Historic Preservation Commission have worked to draft a comprehensively revised Historic Preservation Ordinance consistent with the HPC’s *Choosing Lake Bluff* plan.

Following a request from President O'Hara, Chair Kraus said the presentation is regarding the HPC informal recommendations to revise the historic preservation ordinance. Chair Kraus presented an overview of the goals of the revision process undertaken by the HPC and the procedural changes they propose. A discussion followed.

In response to a question from Trustee Ankenman, Chair Kraus explained a circumstance under which mutually agreed conditions would allow a review process to end early.

In response to a question from Trustee Markee, Chair Kraus said that the goal under the new ordinance is to emphasize and consider each building separately. Rather than just identify a property as a whole, each building or structure such as a manor house, garage and greenhouse would be identified as part of the property. This would give the Village more specific documentation so that if there are modifications to any of those particular buildings the Commission and the Village know exactly what the intent was in the landmark application.

In response to a question from Trustee Charlot, Chair Kraus said the general approach has been to landmark the exterior of the entire building with reference to the attributes (façade, double hung windows, etc.) of that building that makes it attractive for landmark status.

Chair Kraus continued by reviewing the current and proposed key changes to demolition review and noted the demolition review process is for a significant alteration or demolition request for non-landmarked structures.

In response to a question from Trustee Ankenman, ATVA Glen Cole explained how the 50% percentage applies to floor area as proposed and as it would apply to the square footage of exterior walls as viewed on an elevation after these revisions. He commented that gross floor area calculations are influenced by what is going on inside the house and so are not the best representation of the magnitude of exterior changes.

In response to a question from Trustee Ankenman, Village Administrator Drew Irvin said architects have stated that elevations which are not visible from the street still matter for the integrity of the structure.

In response to a comment from Trustee Ankenman, Chair Kraus said the trigger point of 50% is trying to make that administratively less cumbersome than it has been, so that the Commission would look at a request for a significant demolition and a factor in the HPC's consideration is where the demolition occurs. If the demolition and a reconstruction occur at the back of the lot that would be a different discussion than if it would occur where it affects the streetscape. He said that he believes this discretion should be exercised at the Commission level rather than part of the calculation process for determining the review.

Trustee Ankenman said she was just thinking that a gross area floor is a calculation that has to be done regardless but determining if 50% of the exterior walls are affected is an additional calculation that needs to be done. ATVA Cole emphasized that the first goal is to align the ordinance's trigger points with what it is designed to achieve which is the preservation of exterior appearance. It is possible that this may be additional work but he thinks most of the time it will be clear when the structure is or is not

subject to review without a formal calculation. He said that it is a good point that the calculation is an added requirement for someone submitting for a building permit.

In response to a question from Trustee Charlot, ATVA Cole said there were a few renovations where there were substantial interior changes and a few exterior changes that were pushing the gross floor area into a required review. These examples drove this change and the goal is to remove the requirement that these types of changes be reviewed by the HPC.

In response to a question from Trustee Markee, Chair Kraus said most demolition reviews are clear cut and most demolition reviews that come before the HPC are settled in one meeting. He does not anticipate that the additional 60-day delay for a demolition would be triggered often. He said one of the things discussed last year was having a more aggressive approach for landmarking and historic preservation within the Village. Chair Kraus said that the Commission is going to be very active in presenting landmarks to the Village Board for their approval. In the interim five years until the ability to landmark a pending demolition is sunset, the Commission might be able to look at this differently and the 50-year trigger point for significant demolition review differently. If in five years the Commission has done its work and has designated those structures that should be designated within the Village, the need for this kind of delay probably is less. But especially in the interim, when the Commission is still working through what is a very time-consuming process, the Village does not want to lose structures of importance without having a long opportunity to have a good conversation with the property owner about their intent for a particular structure. This provision gives the Commission and Village more time to work with the property owner on the “triple handful” of structures that the Village really does not want to lose before they are considered for designation as a landmark.

Chair Kraus continued by reviewing the current and proposed key changes to landmark designations and current and proposed key changes to advisory review. He noted that advisory review only applies to landmarked structures.

Trustee Charlot asked what would trigger the Board to consider an extension causing a full year of advisory review. Chair Kraus said that, in his mind, the extension would provide a clear message from the Village that it considers this a landmark critical to the identity of the Village, and if the owner or developer wishes to demolish or significantly change there will be significant discussions around alternatives which could last for 365 days.

In response to a question from Trustee Markee regarding timeframe, ATVA Cole said there are two types of historic review along the North Shore, a certificate of appropriateness (indefinite delay) framework and a fixed delay advisory review framework. He noted the one-year review is common throughout different provisions in both frameworks.

Trustee Ankenman said she prefer to have something numerically that would help the Board understanding how many landmarked homes are in Lake Bluff and how many there will be theoretically in 5 years. Chair Kraus said he thinks about 25 structures in total would represent priorities.

In response to a question from Trustee Ankenman, Chair Kraus said he thinks that many of the owners of these historic structures are fully aware of the history of their home, and for whatever reason have not gone through the landmark process. He said that the Commission will certainly work with all property

owners. In the process that he envisioned, the Commission will have a conversation with the property owner, there will be some education (if the owner wants) as to why the Commission feels that something should be landmarked, and hopefully this results in a mutual application where the property owner is working with the Village to achieve landmark status. He does not want to engage in nominations over the objections of an owner unless absolutely necessary. He would hope those cases are few and hopes that most of the property owners would be very cooperative as the Commission proceeds through the landmark process.

ATVA Cole responded to a question from Trustee Markee and provided demolition review information for surrounding communities. He also reviewed nationwide historic districts and said that a review period of one year is a common breaking point. A discussion followed.

Chair Kraus continued to review the current and proposed summary of review periods for significant demolitions and advisory review; certification of landmarks; and revisions to historic districts and neighborhoods. He said this would extend landmark protection to areas within the Village. If a building, such as a home, is part of an historic district approved by the Village, then that particular structure is subject to the landmark provisions if there is a request for demolition or review. It is extending the landmark protection at its maximum 365-day demolition review to the features that are within the district. He said that the revisions propose two types of districts, contiguous or thematic, and explained both concepts. He explained the historic district and neighborhood process. A discussion followed.

As there was no further discussion, President O’Hara said the Village is criticized every time notable houses are demolished. She believes it is time to protect the charm and the significant historic and architectural features of the Village which has been frequently talked about. She said the Commission has begun the revision process and if this is approved, the Historic Preservation Ordinance would go from an extremely weak ordinance to one that could potentially save some houses in the Village.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Ankenman, seconded by Trustee Meyer, and passed on a unanimous voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

R. Drew Irvin
Village Administrator