



Village of Plainfield
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HPC)
Record of Minutes
Amended

DATE: February 12, 2009

LOCATION: Village Hall

Chairman Lambert called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present:	Commissioners Bortel, Bright, Derrick, Spangler, and Chairman Lambert
Absent:	Commissioners Hendricksen, Olsen, and Wright
Also present:	Sara Javoronok-Planner I Village of Plainfield

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Bortel made a motion that the Commission accept the minutes from the January 22, 2009 meeting as presented. Commissioner Bright seconded the motion.

Chairman Lambert called for a voice vote. All the Commissioners were in favor and the minutes from the January 22, 2009 meeting were accepted as presented.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS:

None

FIVE MINUTE FIELD GUIDE:

Chairman Lambert presented the Five-Minute Field Guide. He departed from his series on architect-designed buildings and talked about Abraham Lincoln on the 200th anniversary of his Birthday and whether he had ever visited Plainfield or stayed in one of the local homes or hotels.

Although it is known that Abraham Lincoln did roam this area in the 1840s thru the 1850s, there is no documentation to support that Abraham Lincoln ever stayed within the Village. It is highly likely though that he did visit Plainfield on more than one occasion due to his close friendship with the members of the Dyer family of rural Plainfield. Chairman Lambert gave the history of the Dyer family. Dr. Charles Dyer became the acting surgeon at Fort Dearborn. In 1841 George Dyer purchased land in DuPage Township, now known as Bolingbrook. He erected a small home on that parcel where he engaged in crop farming and stock-raising. Both the brothers were fierce Abolitionists. Dr. Charles Dyer earned the unofficial designation as President of the Illinois Underground Railroad.

Dr. Charles Dyer was noted as coming to the aid of fugitive slaves throughout Chicago and Illinois. He once defended himself with a walking cane against a captor. He then was rewarded with a gold-topped hickory cane, which is among the collections at the Chicago Historical Society.

It is suggested the George Dyer's home served as a stop on the Underground Railroad. He was elected Will County Sheriff in 1856. His two sons operated the Plainfield farm between 1856 and 1861 while he lived in Joliet. He enlisted in the army and served as Captain during the Civil War.

It is noted in historical accounts that the Dyers were close acquaintances of President Lincoln so it is likely President Lincoln visited the Plainfield Area between 1841 and 1856. He may have been entertained in the Dyer farmhouse, and quite possibly even slept in the house.

President Lincoln appointed Charles Dyer Judge of the mixed court in Sierra Leone (Africa) in 1863 for the suppression of the slave trade. Dr. Charles Dyer presented the only official eulogy for President Lincoln on the African continent.

Chairman Lambert then gave a history of the Dyer Farm. It was purchased by Saxon R. Rathbun in 1868 and then remodeled. An early wing at the rear of the farmhouse was removed when the house was being prepared to be relocated in 1998. This wing may have been the only part of the Dyer-Rathbun Farmhouse that President Lincoln visited. The house was moved in 1998 by the Village of Bolingbrook to its present site on Essington Road in the Village of Bolingbrook. Plans call for it to be incorporated into a living history farm one day. The former site of the building is now occupied by a number of concrete warehouses.

There was a discussion between the commissioners and Chairman Lambert in regards to the present location and condition of the property.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS:

None

PUBLIC COMMENT: (Items not on the Agenda)

None

STAFF REPORT

Planner Javoronok summarized the staff report. She stated no landmark or district applications have been received. No pre-application meetings have been conducted for a landmark or a district. No demolition applications have been received or approved. There are no new properties on the Preservation Watch List and no new items for the Development Report.

Chairman Lambert asked Planner Javoronok if she wanted to make an update to the Monday Committee of the Whole Meeting for those who might not be aware as to what the direction was from the Board. Planner Javoronok stated the potential for a Lockport Street Historic District or a Historic District including the downtown was discussed by the Board. The general opinion of the Board was to continue to let the Commission work on the district that they have been working on. Chairman Lambert stated the Commission will continue to do the work of the Historic Preservation Commission, make a recommendation to the Board for their action, and submit a district nomination in the very near future.

Commissioner Bright thought that was wonderful, but she did not get that impression from the newspaper. She asked if it was okay with the Board to go ahead. Chairman Lambert stated the Board was kind of mute on the issue. They didn't say "no". He felt he was able to answer most of their questions about what the Historic Preservation Commission is doing. He felt the concern of the case that kind of muddied some of the waters recently, was shown by staff to be a site plan review issue and not a Historic Preservation Commission issue at this point because the Commission has no application to be reviewing. There was one outspoken Trustee that stated the Commission should not be proceeding, but the rest were very favorable or neutral.

Commissioner Bright stated a lot of people have asked her if they have to join a district. She said she has been telling them "no". She asked if that was correct. Chairman Lambert stated the process is that a nomination will be submitted. At the Committee of the Whole it was discussed that the original intent was a multiple resource nomination, which would not have been bound by geographic boundaries. However, based on individual conversations with property owners in the downtown, it appears there may be a higher favorability rate for a district than the Commission may have imagined. The nomination has not been completed yet, but it is likely going to be nominated as a geographic boundary. It will be treated much like the East Side Historic District. Once the application

is made, the Commission will have public information meetings. Based on the public information meetings, the Commission will see what the actual boundaries are that the Commission will recommend to the Board. If it is a

geographic boundary, depending on how the boundaries are drawn just like the East Side Historic District, there may be some people who do not consent to be included, but they may be included. It will have to be sorted out through the Commission's public hearing process and the Commission's recommendation to the Board. Planner Javoronok agreed that was how it would work.

NEW BUSINESS:

Planner Javoronok stated staff is looking for Commission comments and a general review of the Residential In-Fill Design Guidelines included in the Commissioners' packets. She stated the guidelines are basically designed to seek compatible redevelopment within the core. She stated there is a review of where things are in the Village at the moment and some of the existing conditions. From there, it goes on to the actual guidelines for the core of the Village. There are some guidelines as far as size and form, basically looking at the orientation of the building, the massing, the scale, setbacks, type and pitch of roofs, and compatibility with adjacent properties. There is information on what is typical for the Village as far as what type of materials would make sense for the core and general materials that are frequently used in the Village. There are some guidelines for porches as far as their compatibility and when and where they would be appropriate. The same things would apply for windows, as far as their pattern and placement and whether it makes sense to have shutters or not. The location of the doors and entryways would be addressed. There are guidelines on additions as far as showing whether they are compatible, and whether there is some differentiation between the original structure and the addition. It also touches on garages as far as the location, design, placement, openings, etc. There is some information on multiple family residences. Some of the locations need to be outlined in the Comprehensive Plan, as far as the different densities in the core and what type of density is appropriate for which location. The same guidelines would apply for Business Transition properties along Rt. 59 and Rt. 30. Planner Javoronok concluded her overview of the guidelines.

Commissioner Bright thought the whole document was outstanding.

Commissioner Derrick asked if staff specifically stayed away from the sticky issue of color. Planner Javoronok stated that was not really intentional. Chairman Lambert suggested that the Commission stay away from colors as regulating colors is not part of their duties. It might be stated that colors sympathetic to the neighborhood are highly encouraged. Commissioner Spangler felt the Commission should stay away from colors completely. Chairman Lambert felt paint is reversible and color should be the owner's expression on their home. Chairman Lambert's concern with color is when people pick out every little detail on a building, but that is reversible. Commissioner Spangler did not want the Commission to tell people what color to paint their house. Commissioner Derrick was just curious why color was not mentioned. She did not necessarily feel it should be included. Commissioner Spangler stated the Homeowner Associations in subdivisions already deal with color in their rules. Planner Javoronok stated in relation to commercial developments, color might come into play during site plan review, but once the development is built it is difficult to regulate color. Commissioner Spangler mentioned the discussion regarding colors on the Gas City project.

Chairman Lambert stated the appropriate place may not be to address color under paint color, but under wall materials. He stated possibly it could be stated materials should be compatible in hue and tone. That also reflects on brick and stone, and that is not a reversible change. Someone might have a red brick home and an addition might appear with brown brick. In the box Planner Javoronok has supplied under wall materials, it may just say that wall materials should match in hue and tone and take a cue from the neighborhood. Chairman Lambert asked Planner Javoronok's opinion of that. She stated that was one place where it could be incorporated. At this point she wanted to stay away from paint colors, but felt that was one way of mentioning color without getting too specific. Commissioner Derrick also felt paint is reversible, but felt brick color is not reversible. Commissioner Spangler asked about historic homes where you might want a contrast between the limestone foundation and a brick foundation. Chairman Lambert stated these are guidelines and you cannot write guidelines that dictate what each building will look like. He felt it is good to at least mention it because some people do not think about brick color when putting on an addition, etc.

Commissioner Derrick questioned the guideline stating buildings with fewer than 4 units shall incorporate elements of traditional residential architecture in Plainfield. She wondered if for fewer than 4 units the scale of the building would be more in scale with other residences. Planner Javoronok stated that was the intent. Chairman Lambert stated this

gets away from monotony issues and other things that are incorporated into the subdivision guidelines that have been developed for new developments, etc.

Chairman Lambert also stated the guidelines were very well done. He commended Planner Javoronok on her good variety of pictures. He found a few typos in editing that he would pass on to Planner Javoronok.

Chairman Lambert mentioned Page 13 and Page 19. He stated some of the guidelines suggest some of the additions should be discernible from the original house. He was wondering if it would be appropriate to add a box statement that says, Note – many historic design recommendations favor discernible differences between historic buildings and their additions, typically accomplished by use of offset massing or materials. He felt maybe an offset addition example could be put on Page 19. Planner Javoronok liked that suggestion. She felt she either needed to change the text for the photo or move the Martin House on Page 13 to Page 16, where it actually focuses on additions.

Chairman Lambert asked the Commissioners to think about a picture of a porch example.

Chairman Lambert had a problem identifying the buildings in the guidelines that are identified as Queen Anne. He felt they were more classical or colonial revival. He asked the Commissioners if they were in agreement that the house on the bottom of Page 20 and on Page 16 is a Queen Anne. Planner Javoronok stated Commissioner Olsen's house would be a good example. Chairman Lambert felt that would be more of a classical revival. It definitely has Queen Anne influences, but has different materials, etc. Commissioner Spangler suggested the Queen Anne photo that Chairman Lambert had used for his Five Minute Field Guide. Commissioner Bright suggested using Chairman Lambert's mother's home, as it is a Queen Anne. Commissioner Derrick agreed that the house in the guidelines should not be used as an example of a Queen Anne. A discussion followed between the Commissioners in this regard. Planner Javoronok asked if the Julian Barnes house would be a good example. Chairman Lambert polled the other Commissioners if they were happy with the Julian Barnes house even though the roof line has been heavily altered. Commissioner Spangler thought it could be used. Commissioner Bright could not remember it, but said that Chairman Lambert's mother's house is a Queen Anne. Commissioner Derrick suggested that in a note it could be recognized that the roof line is not typical due to alterations to this building over time if the Julian Barnes building was used. Commissioner Spangler suggested going on the Internet to get a picture of a true Queen Anne. Planner Javoronok stated she was trying to use as many pictures from Plainfield as she could.

Commissioner Derrick asked if maybe at the beginning of the Appendix – Plainfield Architecture, there could be a sentence or two stating that like most rural towns Plainfield does not have a lot of architect-designed examples of a pure style so you will see things that are influenced, or have many layers of influences. Chairman Lambert stated that would give designers a little bit more freedom as well for doing in-fill. Commissioner Spangler stated today a lot of time is spent developing guidelines. One of the reasons that all of these neighborhoods are so interesting is because they had no design guidelines years ago. Chairman Lambert stated it was not so much that there were no design guidelines but that there was a proliferation of published pattern books. From 1850 on, the pattern books were available on the common market and that is what the builders relied on. They played and twisted with the pattern book and made their own variations. A discussion followed between Commissioner Spangler and Chairman Lambert in this regard.

Chairman Lambert had a comment about Page 14. He made a comment about the picture with the shutters, he felt there should be a line designate or something that shows shutters should be placed at the edge of the window. He felt it was a great example that was included and it should be identified for people. Planner Javoronok stated she could include that note about shutters in the guidelines.

Chairman Lambert told Planner Javoronok that he thinks she did a very nice job putting the guidelines together. He thinks it is very clear and user friendly.

Planner Javoronok stated these will be presented early next month to the Plan Commission and then to the Village Board. Chairman Lambert stated Planner Javoronok really needs to put some credits and a date on the guidelines.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

None

DISCUSSION:

None

ADJOURN:

Commissioner Bortel made a motion that the Commission adjourn. Commissioner Bright and Derrick seconded the motion. Chairman Lambert called for a voice vote. All the Commissioners were in favor.

Since there was no further business before the Commission, Chairman Lambert adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Millan - Recording Secretary