



Village of Plainfield  
Historic Preservation Commission  
Record of Minutes

Date: June 9, 2011

Location: Village Hall

**CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, PLEDGE**

Chairman Bortel called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Roll call was taken; Commissioners Allen, Bright, Olsen, Derrick, Feagans, Witt, Buchanan, Hendricksen and Chairman Bortel were present. Also present were Michael S. Garrigan, Village Planner and Merrilee Trotz, Recording Secretary.

Chairman Bortel led the pledge to the flag.

Mr. Garrigan sworn in the new commissioners, Philip Buchanan and Leif Hendricksen.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Commissioner Derrick made a motion to approve the Agenda. Motion seconded by Commissioner Olsen. Voice vote: All in favor. Opposed – no response. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Commissioner Feagans made motion to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Witt seconded the motion. Vote by roll call: Commissioner Allen, yes; Commissioner Bright, yes; Commissioner Olsen, yes; Commissioner Derrick, yes; Commissioner Feagans, yes; Commissioner Witt, yes; Commissioner Buchanan, yes; Commissioner Hendricksen, yes; Chairman Bortel, yes; 9 yes, 0 no, 0 absent - motion carried.

**CHAIR'S COMMENTS:**

None

**COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:**

None

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** (Items not on the Agenda)

No one approached the microphone.

### **STAFF REPORT**

Mr. Garrigan stated there have been no new pre-applications meetings, no new applications for landmarks or districts; and no new demolition permits. The watch list remains the same at this time. The demolition permit has been issued for 15303 S Rte 59. Chairman Bortel stated the utility companies are in the process of removing any meters and disconnecting services. The house should be removed in the next few weeks.

Mr. Garrigan presented landmark plaques to Mr. and Mrs. Lutter and Dr. Moravec.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

##### **Case No. 1543-041411.HPC Downtown Historic District**

Mr. Garrigan stated this is a public hearing being heard pursuant to public notice in accordance with state statute and applicable ordinances. Mr. Garrigan summarized the staff report. Mr. Garrigan indicated the properties must be contiguous and described the proposed boundaries. The HPC held three informational hearings on the proposed district and the required formal informational meeting was held on May 10, 2011. The consent forms were mailed in accordance with the village ordinance giving the owners of each of the 66 parcels the opportunity to “consent” or “not consent” to the proposed historic district. Staff received 28 yes votes and 21 no votes prior to the deadline of 5:00 pm on May 20, 2011. One vote was disqualified due to an attached condition.

Property owners within a Historic District are not required to make any changes to their property. If they wish to make any major exterior improvements, they would apply for a certificate of appropriateness which would go before the HPC and Village Board. The commission does not generally review interior changes unless the property is landmarked.

There are a number of village documents dating back to 1988 referencing a downtown historic district. The period of significance for the Downtown Historic District is from 1845 to 1945 which would qualify for the fifty year demarcation line. The *Urban Core Survey* recommended ten parcels in proposed district for local landmark designation, 47 buildings were recommended as contributing and only 15 buildings are noted as non-contributing. The former Standard Oil Station has received local landmark designation.

Mr. Garrigan reviewed the findings of fact.

The establishment of a historic district in the downtown is an objective in the *Comprehensive Plan*. The proposed historic district is similar, but slightly smaller than the “Plainfield Commercial Historic District” recommended by ArchiSearch in the *Urban Core Survey*. Staff sent consent forms to each of the property owners of each parcel. As of May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011 the votes in favor of the district outnumbered the “no” votes by 28-21.

Chairman Bortel acknowledged the applicants. Commissioner Olsen stated she is one of the applicants, she has seen other communities with thriving historic districts and she hoped with all the informational meetings that were held that this district would be received favorably.

Commissioner Witt stated he tried to learn how this district could benefit Plainfield economically. After speaking with people from communities with a historic district and the IHPA, he learned there are grants that are available if a district is established.

Chairman Bortel and Commissioner Derrick met with a representative from IHPA on May 20, 2011 who informed them that if the district is certified the properties in the district could be eligible for federal tax benefits. They discussed the boundaries with IHPA and with the exception of one building learned IHPA would support the district.

Chairman Bortel asked for a motion to open the meeting for public comments. Commissioner Derrick made a motion to open the meeting to public comments. Commissioner Feagans seconded the motion. Vote by roll call: Commissioner Allen, yes; Commissioner Bright, yes; Commissioner Olsen, yes; Commissioner Witt, yes; Commissioner Buchanan, yes; Commissioner Hendricksen, yes; Commissioner Feagans, yes; Commissioner Derrick, yes; Chairman Bortel, yes.

Chairman Bortel swore in Cheri Bates of 24028 W. Lockport Street. Mrs. Bates stated that at the second information meeting it was stated the proposed district must include all of the downtown. She felt the proposed district was modified to eliminate one property. She stated the rules and regulations have never been distributed in writing. She would like to have seen the guidelines and restrictions as to what can and cannot be done to a building before she was required to vote.

Mr. Garrigan stated the ordinance does not require any guidelines or restrictions be mailed out with the notice. These guidelines and restrictions are available online in the Code. There has been no change to the boundaries since the notice was mailed out.

Chairman Bortel stated they would not be skipping around the properties picking and choosing; the district would be contiguous for one border to the next. Commissioner Derrick explained the geographical boundary and that the district must be inclusive in order to receive the tax benefit for the property owners. The first three meetings were informal meetings to discuss the boundaries and share information. Chairman Bortel stated the boundaries were established and sent out with the notice for the May 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Chairman Bortel swore in Rick Fobes of 24026 W. Lockport Street. Mr. Fobes purchased his property in 2008. He stated he was a fan of historic districts but is still concerned that the formation of this historic district would not build a commerce and economic basis in downtown Plainfield. He felt there are not enough businesses in the downtown that are destinations to get people to stop and stay. He asked what this historic district would do to build a downtown and was concerned with the restrictions on restorations. He asked about the tax benefits.

Commissioner Derrick explained the benefits and stated these tax benefits are only there if the district is certified.

Chairman Bortel stated that other communities have found their property values have remained more stable with a district. Chairman Bortel presented a letter from Karla Kaulfuss, Historic Preservation Planner for the City of Geneva to be attached to the minutes. The city of Quincy also has a historic district they have fewer empty stores the past two years.

Mr. Fobes was concerned with the aura of the historic district on Lockport Street and whether that will deter growth in the downtown. He also indicated values are currently down.

Chairman Bortel explained that had there been a district in place prior to the rehabilitation of the Coldwell Banker building, this building could have applied under the asepsis of the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits. He further explained how the property at 24027 W Lockport might benefit with the renovations, if the district never happens, he could apply for local landmark and then get on the National Register. If there is a district approved by the Village Board then everybody that has a contributing building could benefit.

Commissioner Derrick stated all the work proposed has to meet with the standards of the Secretary of Interior. This historic district is a tool to help make it more economically successfully, more appealing, and quality of life issues for the people who live in our community. Historic preservation and heritage tourism is becoming a significant tool.

Chairman Bortel swore in Heath Wright, 803 N Bartlett (14907 S Bartlett Ave.) Mr. Wright stated he lives in a Historic District and it has been painless. Mr. Wright supports the idea. He stated if the district is passed the guidelines should be established to identify what is appropriate.

Chairman Bortel swore in Don French, adjacent property owner to the proposed district. Mr. French asked if the district was going to be expanded. Chairman Bortel stated there was no proposal to expand the proposed district. Property owners could petition to join the district if the district is approved and the property meets the criteria. Mr. French asked if the district would increase property values. Commissioner Derrick said the studies they have read indicate property values in the district have improved. Commissioner Derrick said their position was that having a district has helped stabilize values. Chairman Bortel said Rockford formed a residential district and they found over the years that property values within the historic district maintained or increased in value.

Chairman Bortel swore in John Bates. Mr. Bates stated the various presentations were lacking in candor, and that only one side was presented. He felt the votes were counted inappropriately as the 28 yes votes only represented 15 different signors and of the 21 no votes there were 18 different signors. He felt you need to see the guidelines prior to voting on the district. He felt property values are likely to increase without a district. Mr. Bates feels that the Route 66 Route 30 corridor is a pipe dream. Mr. Bates said we need the Plainfield residents to support the downtown; there is only 1-1/2 block of density with only about 12 retail stores, and about 12 bars or eateries in the downtown. Mr. Bates asked what will change that and did not feel a Historic District would make that very easy; how will we develop the empty lots. He asked that his property be taken out of the district.

Chairman Bortel swore in Michael Lambert, co-owner of 15119 S DesPlaines Street and resident of 14805 Eastern Ave. He explained how the tax credits can be reclaimed; if the district is approved then the Commission needs to work to see there is an avenue for heritage tourism. He further explained the reason for his and Mr. Navarro's votes. He presented the nomination with highlights that he felt were incongruous and two photos. He indicated Mr. Navarro's property has no significance without the building at 24004 W Lockport being included in the district.

Chairman Bortel asked if there were any other comments. There was no response.

Chairman Bortel asked for a motion to close the public comment portion of the meeting. Commissioner Derrick made a motion to open the meeting to public comments. Commissioner Olsen seconded the motion. Vote by roll call: Commissioner Allen, yes; Commissioner Bright, yes; Commissioner Feagans, yes; Commissioner Witt, yes; Commissioner Buchanan, yes; Commissioner Hendricksen, yes; Commissioner Olsen, yes; Commissioner Derrick, yes; Chairman Bortel, yes.

Commissioner Derrick stated it was the prerogative of the Commission to further define the boundary of the proposed historic district. Discussion was held regarding the possible removal of the properties on the south side of Lockport from Fox River to James Street. Mr. Garrigan agreed the commission has the prerogative to change the boundaries but suggested they not make any changes at this time as that could change the votes. The boundaries could not be increased but they could delete properties if they chose to do so. Commissioner Derrick said removing these properties would make the proposed district match closer to the ArchiSearch recommendation. Commissioner Derrick explained part of the reason for the elimination of the Wheeler property is a demolition permit has been issued on this property.

Commissioner Feagans commented on eliminating the properties from Fox River to James on the south side of Lockport.

Further discussion was held regarding the boundaries as discussed with IHPA.

Commissioner Hendricksen, Commissioner Buchanan, Commissioner Witt, Commissioner Olsen, and Commissioner Bright all agreed the HPC should stand on the boundaries as presented.

Commissioner Feagans suggested eliminating those properties would make the district stronger but indicated keeping them in will not prevent him from supporting the district because he feels the district is a good thing.

Commissioner Allen had no comments either for or against the proposed district.

Chairman Bortel stated the board would have the prerogative to change the boundaries if they wish. IHPA indicated they could certify the district as it stood but their overlay boundary might be different.

Commissioner Hendricksen made a motion to approve the historic district application for the Downtown Plainfield Historic District per the boundaries identified in the attached map. Commissioner Bright seconded the motion. Vote by roll call. Commissioner Allen, no; Commissioner Olsen, yes; Commissioner Derrick, yes; Commissioner Feagans, yes; Commissioner Witt, yes; Commissioner Buchanan, yes; Commissioner Bright, yes; Commissioner Hendricksen, yes; Chairman Bortel, yes. Motion carried 8-1.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Chairman Bortel presented the subcommittee list.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**DISCUSSION:**

Commissioner Olsen asked if an application for COA had been filed for the house on Bartlett Ave. Mr. Garrigan indicated the building department has spoken with the contractors and they have been instructed to stop any exterior work on the house until a COA had been approved. Mr. Garrigan stated the temporary porch work would have to be rectified.

Chairman Bortel asked if removal of the siding on the Pioneer House needed a COA. Mr. Garrigan said it would need to be reviewed by the HPC.

Chairman Bortel gave an updated report on the historic house behind the GoTane and the plan for demolition of the non-historic house.

**ADJOURN:**

Commissioner Feagans made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Derrick seconded the motion. Voice vote: All in favor. 0 - opposed. Motion carried

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p. m.

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Respectfully submitted,  
*Merrilee Trotz* - Recording Secretary