

**VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
OCTOBER 14, 2015**

**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 October 14, 2015 at 7:03 p.m. in the Village Hall Board Room.

The following members were present:

Present:           Mary Francoeur  
                  Robert Hunter  
                  Cheri Richardson  
                  Janet Nelson, Chair

Absent:           Paul Bergmann  
                  Janie Jerch  
                  Randolph Liebelt

Also Present:     Brandon Stanick, Asst. to the Village Administrator (A to VA)

**2. Consideration of the Minutes from the September 9, 2015 HPC Meetings**

Member Hunter moved to approve the September 9, 2015 Meeting Minutes. Chair Nelson 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. A Public Hearing to Consider a Landmark Nomination Application for the Property Located at 306 E. Witchwood Lane**

Chair Nelson introduced the item and administered the oath to those in attendance.

Mr. Richard Goshgarian, representing Mr. Malcolm Lea (beneficiary of the Estate of Mary Ann Lea), read a letter from Malcolm Lea regarding the landmark nomination application submitted by the HPC. Mr. Goshgarian distributed several photographs of the house to the HPC.

Ms. Amy Rockwell, executor of the Estate of Mary Ann Lea, expressed her concern the vacant house is an attractive nuisance. She noted a roof contractor advised of the wood rot and will be an added expense to keep the roof from collapsing this winter. She noted the Lea's were very private people and this was their home and not something built of any significance. Additionally, she noted the estate is a large piece of property and the longer it takes to sell the longer it will take for the property to be transferred to the beneficiary. Mr. Malcolm Lea nor the estate has any means to keep and maintain the property. She expressed Malcolm Lea is comfortable with having the house

demolished, although it's not his preference. She stated that there have been interested buyers that have backed off because of this process. She expressed her belief the HPC needs to consider balancing the needs of the family and documenting the history of the property.

Chair Nelson asked for comments from the public.

Mr. Paul Shira, a resident of Lake Bluff, advised he lives close to the house and expressed his concerns for the condition of the house noting it's been abandoned and serves as an attractive nuisance. He also expressed his concern the current condition of the house is hurting his property value if the property and house are not improved.

Mr. John Nelson advised he has been a resident of Lake Bluff for eight years. He advised he is shocked at the amount of taxes he pays and believes the condition of the house is affecting the value of his property. He stated he struggles with having this house be designated a landmark because of its negative impact on the surrounding properties.

Ms. Pam Peters, a resident of Lake Bluff, expressed her agreement with the comments previously shared and further expressed her concern with not allowing the property owner to maximize the value of his property. The house has not been properly maintained and with Ian Lea only having worked for Mies van der Rohe does make the house significant.

Mr. Mark Munder, a resident of Lake Bluff, noted he did not attend the previous meetings and would like to know the reason the HPC is pursuing landmark designation of the house.

Chair Nelson thanked everyone for their comments. She noted a landmark in Lake Bluff is not prevented from being demolished. Proposed changes to a landmark structure are presented to the HPC during an advisory review conference for discussion purposes.

Chair Nelson stated the property first came to the HPC through the demolition delay process. The HPC was interested in the history of the house. The house is an example of mid-century modern architecture. We have seen several homes of this style come down in the past several years and the HPC wanted to learn more about the house.

Chair Nelson called for comments from the HPC.

Member Richardson thanked the public for attending and providing comments. She stated preservation is a way future residents can experience Lake Bluff's history. She noted Malcolm Lea's letter reminded her of her own family experiences and understands the position of the family.

In response to a question from Mr. Goshgarian regarding process, Asst. to VA Stanick advised of the landmark process and the advisory review process should the home become a landmark. Mr. Goshgarian expressed his understanding that should the house becomes a landmark the demolition review won't conclude until May 8, 2016. He stated the HPC has hindered the successful transfer of this property. He advised Malcolm Lea is more than happy to provide the HPC will copies of the original house plans.

Member Hunter expressed his agreement the house was not designed by Mies van der Rohe. He noted after hearing the letter from Malcolm Lea and the comments from the neighbors the house does need a lot of work. Member Hunter asked at what point in time the HPC's decisions become punitive when considering landmark designation status.

In response to a question from Member Francoeur regarding the possible subdivision of the lot, A to VA Stanick advised the lot is zoned R-1 and cannot be subdivided. Member Francoeur stated, after hearing from Malcolm Lea and neighboring property owners, she does not want to recommend the house for landmark designation.

Chair Nelson reviewed the criteria for landmark designation and the HPC reached a consensus the following criteria applies:

- The structure, building, site, or landscape has significant character, interest, or value as part of the historic, aesthetic, cultural, or architectural characteristics of the Village, the State of Illinois, or the United States; and
- The structure, building, site, or landscape represents certain distinguishing characteristics of architecture inherently valuable for the study of a time period, type of property, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials.

Following a brief discussion, Member Richardson moved to recommend the Village Board not designate 306 E. Witchwood as a historic landmark. Member Francoeur seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: (4) Francoeur, Hunter, Richardson and Chair Nelson  
Nays: (0)  
Absent: (3) Bergmann, Jerch and Liebelt

In response to Mr. Goshgarian's question regarding the next steps for the application, A to VA Stanick advised the HPC's recommendation will be forwarded to the Village Board for consideration. Mr. Goshgarian expressed concern for prolonging the process and the issuance of a demolition permit.

Mr. Steve Christensen, Village Trustee, confirmed Chair Nelson's statement noting that the Village Board has never overturned a recommendation from the HPC.

##### **5. A Continued Discussion Regarding the History of Areas in Lake Bluff**

Chair Nelson distributed a list of areas previously reviewed by the HPC. The HPC reached a consensus it will prepare written statements of the following areas to educate residents and visitors of Village history:

- Camp Meeting Grounds (identify Children's Home),
- Summer Resort Area,
- Rockland Area,
- Dwyer Settlement,

- Tangley Oaks,
- Lake Bluff Terrace Area,
- Stonebridge,
- Ravine Forest Area,
- Estate Areas (five estate areas),
- Crab Tree Farm, and
- Shore Acres.

**6. Chairperson's Report**

Chair Nelson had no report.

**7. Staff Report**

A to VA Stanick confirmed the next HPC meeting is scheduled for November 11, 2015. In addition, he noted a building permit application has been received for the house located at 466 Sunrise Avenue. The HPC will review the application at its meeting in November.

**8. Adjournment**

As there was no further business to come before the Commission, Member Francoeur moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Richardson seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandon Stanick  
Asst. to the Village Administrator