

**VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
APRIL 12, 2017**

**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 April 12, 2017 and 7:00 p.m. in the Village Hall Board Room.

The following members were present:

Present: Paul Bergmann  
Mary Francoeur (arrived at 7:10 p.m.)  
Janie Jerch (arrived at 7:05 p.m.)  
Randolph Liebelt  
Cheri Richardson  
Janet Nelson, Chair

Absent: Robert Hunter

Also Present: Glen Cole, Assistant to the Village Administrator

**2. Consideration of the Minutes from the March 8, 2017 HPC Meeting**

Member Liebelt moved to approve the March 8, 2017 HPC minutes as presented. Member Richardson seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Chair Nelson stated the HPC's task is to try to protect and preserve the buildings that are important to maintaining Lake Bluff's history and character. As a group we take our responsible very seriously and are often disappointed when buildings that we believe are worthy of saving are seen by others as blank slates for different purposes. She stated last month the ABR's responses to a petition were deemed unacceptable and apologized on behalf of the ABR. She stated we tend to get carried away in our task and we really are here to protect, but sometimes we forget that everyone has a right to express their opinion.

**3. Non-Agenda Items and Visitors**

Chair Nelson stated 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. Significant Demolition Review for 219 East Scranton Avenue**

Chair Nelson introduced the agenda item and invited the petitioner to the podium.

Mr. John Shual, property owner, stated he and his wife purchased 219 E. Scranton Avenue in December 2016 and since that time they have been working with the architect on renovation plans. The plan is to maintain 72% of the exterior and interior walls; although, we have to open up most of the walls to install proper electrical conduit and fixtures, insulation and HVAC. There will be minor elevation changes and the ivy vegetation removed but the overall view from the street will not change.

AVA Cole stated the applicant has been working with Staff to tailor the plan for the HPC review process. He proved the HPC with the updated plans and noted the changes to the rear of the home which included a lower roof line and dormers. Mr. Shaul provided the ABR with letter informing the neighbors of the proposed elevation changes.

In response to a comment from Chair Nelson, Mr. Shual stated the ivy vegetation will be removed from the front of the home and included in the zoning application is a request to build a front porch. Chair Nelson thanked Mr. Shaul for considering how to improve the home without changing the streetscape.

Member Jerch stated it appeals siding will be added and questioned the variety of finishes on the exterior of the house. Mr. Shaul stated the plan is to replace the existing cedar/wood siding but there will be no more variety than what already exist.

Chair Nelson asked if the applicant believe this was once a duplex. Mr. Shaul stated it was a duplex as shown in the demo diagram and the intent is to relocate the stairway to the front of the house.

In response to a question from Member Richardson, Mr. Shaul stated there use to be a shared garage but it has since deteriorated and it make since to move the location for the proposed garage.

Member Bergmann stated this is exactly what historic preservation is all about, about taking a familiar house on the streetscape and rehabilitating it. Preservation is about maintaining the streetscape and façade of the house and this is a great approach. The plans have been altered to present a much simpler and cleaner design. He stated what has been done is very nice and this is what we are trying to encourage.

Chair Nelson stated the home has been here a long time and it will be nice to continue seeing it there possibly a few more decades.

AVA Cole stated the HPC may choose to terminate review of the significant demolition application, take no action on the demotion delay, or extend the demolition review.

As there were no further comments from the Commissioners, Member Richardson moved to terminate the significant demolition review for 219 E. Scranton Avenue. Member Bergmann seconded the motion. The motion passed on an unanimous voice vote.

##### **5. Significant Demolition Review for 270 Arden Shore Road**

Chair Nelson introduced the agenda item and invited the petitioner to the podium.

Mr. Lawrence Booth, petitioner, provided background history on the property and prairie. The structure at 270 Arden Shore is infested with rotting walls, exterior walls are falling apart and the house has become an eyesore over the years. The request is to demolish the yellow house and leave the lot open space on the east end of the property with a long term goal to build a very small cottage for future caregiver.

Mr. Mike Barrett, owner, stated he purchased and have lived in the house since 1997. He stated he is familiar with the criteria for historic homes and from his perspective there is no historic value in keeping the house. Currently, asbestos covers the exterior walls underneath the aluminum siding and there is nothing historical in the interior of the home. Originally the house was built really small there is a cellar for a basement and there were interior upgrades done to the home to make it livable but there is nothing historical left. The major issues associated with the home is the interior flooding, a lot of the crawl spaces underneath the house are not accessible, there is no foundation around the perimeter of the house and the current conditions makes it impossible to get rid of the black mold. Mr. Barrett stated it would cost too much to rehabilitate the home to current living standards. There is no value in the exterior or interior of the house and he cannot come up with a reason to say this is a historical home worth preserving.

In response to a question from Chair Nelson, Mr. Booth and Mr. Barrett confirmed the site is located adjacent, to but was never, a part of Arden Shore.

Member Bergmann asked if the farm house was part of the caretaker's facility for the waystation or radio ship to shore station. There was a fair amount gardening area and asked if it was there to supply the waste station. Mr. Booth stated the waste station was rumored to have been done during World War II and a portion of the property was donated to the telephone company. The property was purchased from Illinois Bell and the radio station was demolished, the chicken coop remodeled and the barn on the western end of the property was rebuild facing north/south. Member Bergmann stated the remodeled chicken coop is a delightful area.

Chair Nelson asked if the prairie was the only thing remaining. Mr. Booth stated the prairie and the beautiful oak trees which will become an oak savannah.

Member Francoeur stated the property is not visible from the streetscape and with the owners reputation the site will become more historic than it is at this point and she is in favor of the request.

Members Jerch and Richardson had no questions but agreed the preservation plan is delightful.

Member Bergmann asked how they envision a caretaker cottage looking like on the property. Mr. Booth stated it would the same type of the building as the remodeled chicken coop, but about half the size, a one story building further away from barn to allow more open space.

In response to a question from Member Liebelt, Mr. Booth stated there is no public sewers or water the property has wells and a septic system that will be preserved.

Member Bergmann stated the major problem may be drainage on the field. Mr. Booth stated they will review methods needed to mitigate the flooding.

Chair Nelson stated as far as historic preservation goes the applicant is on the right track because they are preserving the most historic portion which is the prairie. Chair Nelson stated the HPC may choose to: terminate review of the significant demolition application, take no action on the demotion delay, or extend the demolition review.

As there were no further comments from the Commissioners, Member Jerch moved to terminate the significant demolition review for 270 Arden Shore Road. Member Liebelt seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

**6. Significant Demolition Review for 112 Ravine Forest Drive**

Chair Nelson introduced the agenda item and invited the petitioner to the podium.

Mr. Jeff Lynch the property owner stated the property has been on the market for quite some time. The midcentury split level home was purchased approximately 15 years ago and needs a significant amount of improvements such as new bath, windows, kitchen, garage, etc. The house is not marketable in its current condition, even with a lower marketing price, and the request is to demolish the home and build a new one.

Chair Nelson asked if there were any previous demolition permits for submitted for that house. Mr. Lynch said he has worked in Lake Bluff for approximately 25 years and he is unsure if any request have been submitted. He attempts to find current value in any structure but the home is not marketable and his interest is to build something fresh and clean.

In response to a question from Chair Nelson, Mr. Lynch stated he had spoken with Staff to better understand if there were any resistance and in his mind's eye the transitional farm houses are popular and noted there will be something designed prior to the demolition.

Member Liebelt stated he has no problem with the demolition request and he think it will enhance the Village and streetscape.

Members Richardson, Jerch, Francoeur and Bergmann agreed with Member Liebelt.

Chair Nelson stated she does not think the house will be missed but she is interested in knowing what will be built in its place.

As there were no further comments from the Commissioners, Member Richardson moved to terminate the significant demolition review for 112 Ravine Forest Drive. Member Bergmann seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

**7. Significant Demolition Review for 136 East Sheridan Road**

Chair Nelson introduced the agenda item and invited the petitioner to the podium.

Mr. David Munaretto with Emerald Homes stated the house was a foreclosure prior to their purchase and is in a state of significant disrepair because it was not properly cared for by the prior owners.

The home has significant structural, mold, HVA, roof, plumbing, masonry, amongst other issues and does not have any historical significance.

Chair Nelson stated there is historical significance associated with the home as it was several homes built to look like part of Williamsburg, VA and sold at the same time.

Member Bergmann stated the development is currently known as the Hansen Werbane houses after a very popular contractor in Lake Forest.

Mr. Matt Van Drunen (resident) stated their home is located east of the property and one of the seven style of homes in the development. The homes are unique but this particular home is beyond repair and he support the demolition.

AVA Cole read the email from Kathy Sheppard (resident) which provided background history and her preference for the new home to resemble the remaining homes in the development. A discussion ensued regarding the proposed plans for the new home.

Mr. Munaretto stated they have submitted the plans for the new house which he believe will fit well within the community. The plan was shared with the neighbors prior to the meeting and they thought it was tasteful. There are other plans that could be built but this is one that fit well within the community.

Chair Nelson asked how the proposed house would sit on the narrow lot. Mr. Munaretto stated this type of house was designed to fit on a 55 ft. wide lot, with roughly 14 ft. of sideyard setback on both sides and the garage moved to the right of the home to preserve the parkway trees.

Member Francoeur stated the proposed color will make the home stand out and not blend in with the existing homes. The landscaping impacts how a home fits into the neighborhood and asked if more mature vegetation could be used. Mr. Munaretto stated they are willing to consider alternate colors and have a professional landscape design done on the property.

Member Bergmann commented on Ms. Sheppard's email noting this is a row of houses designed under one concept by one architect and a highly competent architect. This is one of the neighborhood that have been looked at from a preservation standpoint and questioned if it could be set up as a historic neighborhood such as a National Registry History District or Local District to preserve this type of streetscape in Lake Bluff. He asked if there were any designs in their catalog similar to the design of the remaining homes in the development. This is a home with a lot of deficits but it still one of the seven homes built under a concept, this is a specially designed neighborhood in our town and we are interested in maintaining the visual concept of the Village.

Chair Nelson stated she is bother because there is a home identical to the proposed home located on the other side of the street.

Member Jerch stated she hope this could be a repeat of one of the HPC's first success demolition which was a historic house on a prominent street. The builders worked with the HPC to build something similar to the original house thereby keeping the streetscape constant. She stated in this

case that should be a requirement because it is part of the “seven sisters” and she would very much like to see something in a similar style go back up there. Mr. Munaretto stated he is not opposed to an elevation change that would reflect something more traditional being built to replace the home.

Member Jerch stated she drive pass the house to observe the changes and she does have a problem with the proposed demolition.

Members Jerch, Liebelt and Francoeur expressed their agreement with Ms. Sheppard’s suggestion regarding the proposed housing design.

Chair Nelson stated the HPC may choose to terminate review of the significant demolition application, take no action on the demotion delay, or extend the demolition review. Mr. Munaretto asked how they could continue working on the design of the new home with extending the demolition review process. A discussion followed.

In response to a question from Chair Nelson, AVA Cole stated the purpose of the review process provide a fail self to ensure the committee does not miss an opportunity to landmark a property. The extension demolition review is designed to allow the HPC addition time to start the landmark process.

Chair Nelson stated the HPC is not against the demolition but has expressed its preference for a replacement house that is more consistently with the existing homes.

As there were no further comments from the Commissioners, Member Bergmann moved to extend the demolition review for an additional 30 days for 136 E. Sheridan Road. Member Jerch seconded the motion. The motion failed on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: (3) Jerch, Francoeur and Bergmann  
Nays: (3) Liebelt, Richardson and Chair Nelson  
Absent: (1) Hunter

AVA Cole advised the HPC of their action as a result of the tie vote and following a brief discussion, the aforementioned motion failed passed on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: (2) Bergmann and Jerch  
Nays: (4) Francoeur, Richardson, Liebelt and Chair Nelson  
Absent: (1) Hunter

As there were no further comments from the Commissioners, Member Richardson moved to terminate the significant demolition review for 136 E. Sheridan Road. Member Liebelt seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: (5) Liebelt, Richardson, Jerch, Francoeur and Chair Nelson  
Nays: (1) Bergmann  
Absent: (1) Hunter

**8. Continued Advisory Review Conference for the Proposed Demolition of the Landmark Home Located at 512 Sunrise Avenue**

Chair Nelson reopened the Advisory Review Conference for the Proposed Demolition of the Landmark Home located at 512 Sunrise Avenue and advised that the applicant, Mr. Dan Horvat would not be in attendance. She stated the Village Board approved a resolution to extend the review period an additional 30 days until May 1, 2017.

AVA Cole stated following the extension the applicate can submit the request and the permit to proceed with the demolition.

Chair Nelson stated the HPC have exhorted all authority and the HPC may choose to: terminate review of the significant demolition or take no action on the demotion delay which ends May 1, 2017.

Member Francoeur stated the HPC have exhorted all authority and there could quite possible be a garden at the location this summer which is more appealing that looking at a pile of dirt.

Member Jerch stated if the owner does decide to demolish the house that it should be done in front of everyone that goes to the beach all summer long.

Chair Nelson opened the floor to public comments.

Ms. Mary Fielding (resident) stated she live in a home built in 1923 and we added on to the home taking into consideration that the home, although not designed as a landmark, does add a significant amount of charm to the streetscape. She wonder worry the HPC never considered asking the owner to move the home so it can be placed on another parcel. This would prevent the home from going into a dumpster which is appalling and stated it is time to think outside the box because we have become a throw away society. This is a beautiful home and the Village needs more teeth in its preservation ordinance. Chair Nelson stated the demolish applicant does address that question and the owner elected not to move the home. The demolition application was recently revised to include some written responses which includes “have you considered relocating the structure to an alternate location and if is provide details”, then she stated the owners response was “I can not imagine anyone considering this house worthy of relocation” which is sort of a non-answer to the question. At the time the HPC was thinking as she stated it just seems there are times when the house may not be suitable for whoever is asking to demolish it but suitable for a family at some point.

Ms. Fielding stated the currently owners have already said this house have no value to them, so the requirement then becomes does it have value to the community; therefore, they should find someone willing to relocate the home. Member Jerch stated one of the issue with the house is that it fits well with the surrounding homes. Should the house be relocated you would get half a steak because a big part of its value is in the location and transition that provide architecturally between the homes on each side.

Mr. Jerry Doyle (resident) asked if the house was ever certified a landmarked home. Chair Nelson stated no one ever certified this particular house because there is no big rush for certification but needs to be made know to residents because this could help save a home from demolition.

Mr. Doyle stated he has been in historic preservation for a while and find it frustrating because nothing changes. The house is one of the few landmarked homes in the Village and there is no extra protection for the house and he asked what could be done to change the Village point of view regarding this matter. Chair Nelson stated the HPC has been directed to review the current Historic Preservation Ordinance and submit its recommendations to the Village Board. She stated there need to be something done to preserve landmarked houses because the idea of landmarking is to save house that are important to the community.

Mr. Doyle expressed his understanding the house is being demolished for a playground area not a garden and it is a shame we cannot preserve the streetscape. The HPC should not terminate the review but allow the extension to lapse.

Member Bergmann stated one of the most important things needed when reviewing the historic preservation ordinance is a community advocacy present at multi public forums. This is one of the most important aspects in being able to serve on the HPC is to have public support for preserving structures or advocating a position with regards to changing the course for a particular development.

Chair Nelson stated everyone supports historic preservation until it effects their property then it becomes controversial; therefore, we need to ways to encourage people to appreciate the historic part of preservation.

Ms. Kate Briand (resident) stated everyone appears to be on the same page but we have reach the point when we have to let go even though we do not want to. At the Village Board meeting there was a lot of concerns regarding future plans for the property and the possibility that a larger house may be built. She asked if there will be a request made for Mr. Schmucker to execute a restrictive covenant. She stated this home is part of an intention array of homes and she can see how this does not duck tail with the conversation about E. Sheridan Road. She is sadden this is happening and thanked the HPC for their efforts to preserve the house. Ms. Briand commented on the Lake Forest Historic Districts and asked if this these types of districts are good enough for Lake Bluff. She is tired of the Village trying to figure out what is the most popular position it is time to take definitive action whether people like it or not.

Chair Nelson stated this parcel by itself would not allow another house to be built but could be a buildable lot because there is already an existing home on the parcel. The owner did agree to sign a restrictive covenant does the documents does not go with the property. Chair Nelson stated we need to push the historic part other than the word and discuss what is historic and why not make it a private cause.

Member Richardson stated the HPC tried for years to encourage preservation but there was not much community involvement. She stated community involvement and education are the keys needed to ensure resident are inform about preservation.

Mr. Doyle stated he think a way in is to appeal to people's financial self-interest by making them aware of the product benefit. There are houses sitting on the market and buyers need a reason to

purchase a home in Lake Bluff. The community character is the key to attracting buyers and should that be loss homes will stay on the market and housing value will continue to stagnate.

Member Bergmann provided information on the benefits associated with landmarking a home. Should a home be landmarked and significant remodel done the property taxes can be frozen for up to 12 years this will amount in significant tax savings. There are people that are uninformed and willing to walk away from possible savings on their property taxes because they think that preservation is something bad. He stated there are significant financial savings available which also includes the recently implemented fee waiver.

As there were no further comments from the Commissioners, It was the consensus of the HPC not to take any action.

**9. Continued Discussion Regarding Historic Preservation Regulations and Historic Districts**

Chair Nelson introduced the item and revised the material presented in the packet. She stated the HPC need to get a better understanding of historic districts before submitting its recommendation to the Village Board. She asked the Commissioners to review the historic districts and certification then provided two examples of homes that could be landmarked. A discussion followed.

Member Richardson suggested a special workshop meeting be conducted to discuss the agenda item. It was a consensus of the HPC to schedule a special workshop meeting to discuss historic preservation regulations and historic districts.

Chair Nelson stated On May 24<sup>th</sup> (12:15 p.m.) the Chicago Architectural Foundation is scheduled to conduct a lecture on the campaign for sensible bungalow alterations its lecture hall (224 South Michigan Avenue).

Chair Nelson thanked the audience for their participation.

**10. Chairperson's Report**

Chair Nelson had no report.

**11. Staff Report**

There was no Staff report.

**12. Adjournment**

There being no further business to consider and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Glen Cole  
Assistant to the Village Administrator