

Block Meetings Discuss Landmark Issue



Residents of the 4500-block of Mozart Street met in Buffalo Park in July to discuss a potential Chicago Landmark District. It was one of 19 block meetings held throughout Ravenswood Manor this summer.

A series of block meetings were held this summer to discuss the potential of a Chicago Landmark District designation for Ravenswood Manor. The block meetings had been recommended by the RMIA Board in April, following receipt of a 47-page research report on the area's significance as a potential local landmark district (see Spring 2018 *Manor News*).

Nineteen separate block meetings were held during May, June, and July, covering 22 blocks in the Manor. According to sign-in sheets, 166 different households attended these meetings, most of which were held in the residence or yard of a block resident. Two of the block meetings were held in Buffalo Park.

There are an estimated 520 households in the neighborhood--and the block meetings were attended by 32% of these households. In addition, since many meetings included two members of the same households, more than 200 total residents attended the meetings.

RMIA Board members were present at each block meeting to discuss the results of the research study, to respond to questions, and to hear the concerns of Manor residents about the potential of a Chicago Landmark District.

One frequently-voiced concern was the need to develop Manor-specific design guidelines, which could be used to help review exterior alterations to buildings in the event a local landmark district is pursued by the Manor. It was generally agreed that these guidelines needed to be created before any further steps were taken to initiate a formal landmark designation process.

At each block meeting a poll was taken of residents in attendance, in order to gauge their reaction to the concept of a local landmark designation. Based on the 166 households represented at these meetings, the totals were:

- 78 households (47% of those who attended a block meeting) expressed "support" for a potential local landmark designation
- 33 households (20% of those who attended a block meeting) expressed "opposition" to a local landmark district
- 54.5 households (33%) said they were "undecided" (Note: if two members of a household were present at the block meeting, each got half a vote)

Due to the large number of undecided residents, the RMIA Board voted at its July 9th meeting to request that Manor-specific design guidelines be developed prior to any formal actions to initiate a local landmark designation process. RMIA President Athene Carras then sent a letter to the Chicago Department of Planning and Development (DPD), which staffs the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, requesting staff assistance in preparing draft guidelines.

On July 17th, in a letter to Carras, DPD Bureau Chief Eleanor Esser Gorski agreed to not initiate the landmark designation process until after: 1) acceptable design guidelines are completed and 2) city staff is able to "confirm widespread homeowner support for [the landmark] proposal."

The RMIA Board thanks those Manor residents who organized and hosted a block meeting this summer.

Are you curious?

If you have a Manor-related question, please send it to curiousmanor@ravenswoodmanor.com.



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Manor Details



Stone ornament enlivens this Queen Anne-style residence on the 4400-block of Richmond Street. Built in 1909, it is one of the oldest houses in Ravenswood Manor.

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Summer in the Manor



Bike Parade

The annual Independence Bike Parade was held June 30th, attracting more than one hundred adults and children, as well as their bike, trikes, wagons—plus a fire engine, courtesy of the Chicago Fire Department. Thanks to the volunteers who organized this four-block parade along Manor Avenue, which ended in Manor Park with free frozen paletas, courtesy of the RMLA.



Credit: Deb Mell



Credit: Kelli Nelson

Wilson Block Party

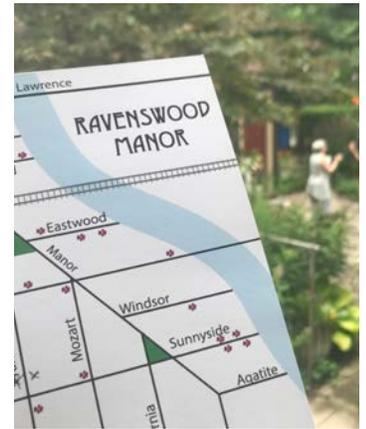
The temporary closure of the Wilson Avenue bridge this summer gave residents of the 2700-block of Wilson a rare opportunity on July 14th to do what many other blocks in the Manor do annually—to hold a block party in the street itself.

Concerts in the Park

The 24th season of free summer concerts in Manor Park—and other venues—concluded on August 31st with former resident Rokko Jans and his annual Neighborhood Talent Show. Thanks to the Horner Park Advisory Council (and its sponsors), as well as John O'Connell, for organizing this fabulous neighborhood tradition.



Credits: Jim Peters



Garden Walk

More than 20 lush and varied gardens were featured in this year's Manor Garden Walk on Sunday July 22nd. Thanks to the gardeners for opening their yards and for serving drinks and snacks to the garden walkers. And a special thanks to the RMLA and the Manor Garden Club—especially Jeff Sell and Shelly Staat—for organizing this event, whose origins date to 1957.



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Front pages of Winter 2017-18 Manor News and the landmark research report.

December 2017: A front page article in *Manor News* (Winter 2017-18, "Does the Manor Merit Local Landmark Protection?") notes that RMIA Board has commissioned a preliminary landmark study of Ravenswood and provides eight Q&As relating to a potential landmark designation.

March 2018: A front page article in *Manor News* (Spring 2018) reports that a landmark research study will be presented at the Semi-Annual Meeting on April 2nd. The article suggests ways for residents to find out more information or to provide comments to the RMIA Board.

April 2, 2018: Sixty residents attend the RMIA's Semi-Annual Meeting to hear from Terry Tatum, research report author, and to pose questions about the landmark designation and permit review process.

April 9, 2018: RMIA Board recommends that a series of block meetings be held throughout the summer to present the landmark report to residents, to answer questions, to hear concerns, and to assess the general level of support or opposition to landmark designation.

June 2018: Front page article in *Manor News* (Summer 2018) notifies residents that a series of block meetings will be held to discuss the landmark research study—and its possible implications—with residents. Article also notes sources for additional information and ways for residents to comment.

May-July 2018: Nineteen block meetings (representing 22 blocks in the Manor) are organized by RMIA to discuss the Landmark Report and to hear questions and concerns from residents. Nearly one-third of the 520 households in the Manor attend these meetings.

July 9, 2018: RMIA Board discusses preliminary results of the first 17 block meetings. Following a discussion by those in attendance (including 30+ residents), Board votes, 11-1, to send report to City staff so it can assess neighborhood's potential for landmark eligibility and to convene Zoning Committee to develop draft design guidelines.

July 10, 2018: A letter is sent from RMIA President Athene Carras to Eleanor Gorski, Bureau Chief of the Chicago Department of Planning and Development (DPD). Attached is a copy of the Landmark Report and a formal request that no vote be taken on this matter (by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks) until Manor-specific design guidelines can be formulated, which are mutually agreeable to CCL staff and RMIA.

July 17, 2018: A letter from Gorski is received by Carras, which: 1) acknowledges receipt of draft designation report, 2) agrees to provide staff feedback on draft design guidelines, and 3) agrees, "as RMIA requested, [to] not initiate landmark designation at this time."

Aug. 6, 2018: RMIA's Zoning Committee (expanded to 14 members) begins the process of developing Manor-specific design guidelines, which would be used in the event the neighborhood decides to initiate a landmark designation process.

Oct. 9, 2018: RMIA Annual Meeting to include a discussion featuring residents of existing Chicago Landmark Districts.



The Planters Thank You

Our thanks to the members of the Manor Garden Club who have beautified the planter beds along the entrance ramp to the Francisco 'L' station. Particular thanks to club member Deb Robinett and the First Slice Pie Café for watering—and supplying buckets of water for—the planters during this summer's dry weeks.

Event Calendar

RMIA Annual Meeting:

Tues., Oct. 9, 7 p.m., Horner Park Fieldhouse

Weekly and Monthly Events

Horner Park Farmer's Market:

Saturdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., California and Montrose

Horner Park Advisory Council:

1st Mondays of the month, 7 p.m., 2nd floor, Horner Park Fieldhouse

RMIA Board:

2nd Mondays of the month, 7 p.m., 2nd Floor, Horner Park Fieldhouse (please confirm schedule at www.ravenswoodmanor.com)

CAPS—17th District, Police Beat 1724: 3rd Tuesdays of most months, 7 p.m., Horner Park Fieldhouse (please confirm schedule at www.chicagopolice.org/caps/district17)

About RMIA

Manor News is published quarterly by the Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association.

Established in 1914, the RMIA is a neighborhood association run entirely by volunteers. We hold monthly board of directors meetings, stage various social events and special projects, and maintain communication channels through our web site, e-mail alerts, and newsletter. Your annual RMIA membership helps to support all of this work.

The RMIA Mission Statement is: "To promote the welfare of the community in respect to the maintenance and improvement of the physical appearance of the private and public property; the compliance with the laws as applicable to private and public property; the maintenance of facilities with respect to the safety, health, and welfare of its residents."

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