

Minutes for RMIA Annual Meeting, Tuesday, October 9, 2018

Neighbors Attending: 100 (includes board members)

Visitors: Alderman Deb Mell, Jason Hernandez, Matt Eisenbart

Panelists: Paul Dickman, Wicker Park Committee (chair, planning and zoning)
Joanne Fehn, Villa Improvement League
Caroline Harney, Jackson Park Highlands Association
Paddy Lauber, Logan Square Preservation

Board Members present: Athene Carras, Brinda Gupta, Mina Marien, Kathy Monk, Alan Mueller, Jim Peters, Craig Pierson, Bette Rosenstein, Suzy Thomas, Joe Valentin, Lisa Washburn, Victoria Wiedel, Scott Wheeler

Incoming Board Members: Tony Armour, Tom Eul, Patrick Johnson, Michael Leff, Beth Lynch, Deb Robinett, Gary Smith, Matt VanderZee.

The meeting was called to order by RMIA President Athene Carras at 7:07 p.m.

State of the Manor:

- A study exploring Historic Landmark District status was begun
- History Station was installed in Ravenswood Manor Park
- LaPointe Park re-design is underway

Elections:

- 4 Board members were elected to another 2-year term
- 8 new members were elected to the Board
- The Executive Board was re-elected. A Treasurer is needed.

Panel Discussion:

Paddy Lauber, Logan Square Preservation, said they became a Landmark District in 2005 and the district has been expanded twice. She originally fought landmark, but said it was the best thing that ever happened because of developers.

Paul Dickman said Wicker Park residential area became a landmark district in 1991 after 10 years of discussion/fighting. There are 500+ buildings in their district. The Milwaukee Avenue commercial area became a landmark district in 2008.

Joanne Fehn said the Villa, with 126 homes and 2 apartment buildings, known for Chicago bungalow and arts & craft style homes became a landmark district in 1983.

Caroline Harney said Jackson Park Highlands, a neighborhood of 278 homes of bungalow, 4-square, and diverse styles, became a landmark district in 1988.

Athene said there are 518 buildings in Ravenswood Manor.

Some questions asked and comments were:

How did you communicate with neighbors when going through the Landmark process?

What is it like to work with the Landmark Office?

- Paddy: Landmarks (Commission on Chicago Landmarks) reviews projects with large projects going to the committee which meets once a month. Must sit in front of committee to answer questions. The neighborhood association then reviews the project. It's important to have good plans.
It is not difficult to deal with smaller projects and they can be approved in a day.
- Paul: Small project permits can take one day.
Window replacement could take a month, but you can consult with Landmarks ahead of time. The Chicago Dept. of Buildings is far worse to deal with than Landmarks.
- Joanne: the Villa fought a townhome development. There was a 60% return on a survey and neighbors would only accept single family homes.
Developing relationship with Landmarks helps things go smoother.
Landmarks comes out to view properties
With windows, have to preserve edifice. A lot of money can be spent on windows to maintain character of neighborhood.
- Caroline: Has been on neighborhood board for 10 years. It is easy to work with Landmarks.

What is Landmark's stance on window replacement?

- Paddy: Use Marvin windows. Landmarks wanted wood on both sides, Paddy said 'no' – wanted aluminum on outside and Landmarks said 'OK'. They do want divided lights windows.
If you want a different brick molding around windows and it exists in the neighborhood, take a picture to make your case.
- Paul: Landmarks will always ask you to preserve existing windows first.
His neighborhood has a list of approved window manufacturers.

Has Landmark status affected property value or days a property is on the market?

- Paddy: Landmark didn't make it go down.

What is the design guideline's role?

- Joanne: they have a lot of stucco homes and you need artisans for repair.
They are always looking for alternative materials to keep costs down. Found that you can push back on Landmarks.
The Villa has specific guidelines inspired by Landmarks and evolved from there.

Has Landmark status affected affordability or racial balance?

- Caroline: it preserved existing diversity.

What about clay tile roofs?

Can use original material or modern substitute
Can stop work on a project.

- Caroline: replacing with asphalt roof can be a problem.
Landmarks looks to the neighborhood for reasonableness.
- Paul: roofs and siding will need permits in a Landmark district.

What about fences?

Any fence over five feet requires a building permit which would then require a Landmarks review.

Would you vote for Landmark today?

- Paddy: Definitely.
- Paul: it made the neighborhood what it is today.
- Joanne: people would move out before getting rid of Landmark.
- Caroline: Can't say.

What are the negative impacts of Landmark?

- Caroline: there has been a building for sale for a long time – she's not sure why.
- Paul: it hasn't discouraged developers.

Why should other owners be charged more?

- Paddy: you can get permit fee reimbursed.
It takes more thought and time, but the neighborhood benefits.

What about new construction?

- Paul: you will have a say in it, but Landmarks will accept something modern.
- Paddy: what is already there may not be contributing or has been altered, but it is landmarked .

How do you reverse Landmark if it is approved?

The same process as getting Landmark– in reverse.

What are the financial benefits to Landmark?

- Caroline: It preserves the quality of the neighborhood.

Can a neighborhood organization trump a Landmark decision?

- Joanne: there was a lawsuit in the Villa. The question is, 'is there consistency?'
The alderman has the final say.
- Paul: property owners have property rights. Landmarks will look for ways to help you.

Athene explained what the next steps are in the process for the Manor. She also stated that the Zoning Committee is working on guidelines for our neighborhood including for dormers.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

The next meeting will be on **Monday, November 12th**, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. at Horner Park Field House on the second floor.

Submitted by Kathy Monk