

MANOR NEWS

FALL

2018

Annual Meeting: Elections and a Landmark Panel



Boundaries of the existing Ravenswood Manor National Register District, which also is the study area for a local landmark report issued earlier this year.

The annual membership meeting of the Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association (RMIA) will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 9th, at 7 p.m. in the large assembly room of the Horner Park Fieldhouse, 2741 W. Montrose Ave. This will be the RMIA's 104th annual membership meeting, dating back to its founding in 1914.

The agenda will include: the election of Board members and officers, as well as a panel discussion and Q&A session on the potential of a Chicago Landmark designation for Ravenswood Manor.

Board Elections

The following Board members are being nominated for an additional two-year term on the RMIA Board: Kathy Monk, Craig Pierson, Bette Rosenstein, and Suzy Thomas.

The following RMIA members are being nominated for an initial two-year term on the RMIA Board: Tony Armour, Tom Eul, Patrick Johnson, Michael Leff, Elizabeth Lynch, Deb Robinett, Gary Smith, and Matt VanderZee.

These board members are being nominated for a one-year term as officers: Athene Carras (President), Suzy Thomas (Vice President), and Kathy Monk (Secretary).

Many thanks to the RMIA Nominating Committee for its work in developing this slate of board candidates. The committee members are: Brian Basler, Cristina Chavez, Mina Marien (chair), Christopher Narloch, and Jim Peters.

Landmark District Discussion

Following the Board elections, there will be a panel discussion featuring representatives of several community organizations whose neighborhoods are designated Chicago Landmark Districts.

The panelists will present their views on the pros and cons of being a Landmark District, before answering questions from the audience. Among the neighborhoods that will be represented are: Logan Square (designated a local landmark district in 2005), Jackson Park Highlands (1989), the Villa (1983), and Wicker Park (1991).

Although Ravenswood Manor is only in the investigative stages regarding a potential local landmark designation (see other articles in this issue), this will be an excellent opportunity for residents to discuss this topic with residents from existing Chicago Landmark Districts.

LOCAL LANDMARKING: Where Can I Find More Information?

If you would like to learn more about the potential of a Chicago Landmark District for Ravenswood Manor, please check out http://bit.ly/RMIALDINFO. Click on the menu bar (three stacked lines) at top left. Here, you will find a copy of the Preliminary Landmark Report, as well as additional resources, including the handouts that were provided at the block meetings this past summer. You also can find much of this same information on the Ravenswood Manor web site (www.ravenswoodmanor.com) under "Community: Landmark District."

Comments

If you would like to provide your opinion—or a question—about the concept of a local landmark district, you have several options: 1) you can "submit a comment" at the RMIALDINFO site above, 2) you can send an email to landmarkdistrict@ravenswoodmanor. com, or 3) you can send a written note to the RMIA Board at P.O. Box 25486, Chicago, IL 60625.

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





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 RMIA.









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.

redit: Deb Mell

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Concerts in the Park

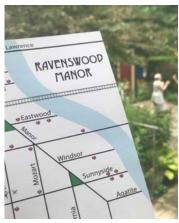
The 24th season of free summer concerts in Manor Park—and other venues—concluded on August 31st with former resident Rokko Jans and his annual Neighborhood Talent Show. Thanks to the Horner Park Advisory Council (and its sponsors), as well as John O'Connell, for organizing this fabulous neighborhood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













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 RMIA and the Manor Garden Club—especially Jeff Sell and Shelly Staat—for organizing this event, whose origins date to 1957.



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TIMELINE:

Origins of the Landmark Issue

During this summer's block meetings (see page 2), one of the questions raised by numerous residents was: "Why is the Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association (RMLA) even considering the topic of local landmark designation?" Here is a timeline showing the evolution of this issue over the past 2½ years.

March 2016: A front page article in *Manor News* (Spring 2016) reports on the recent "loss" of three original Harmon Model Homes (built 1909-10), as well as the wholesale rehabilitation of 4432 N. Mozart St. (1,000 copies of the *Manor News*, a quarterly newsletter published by RMIA, are distributed to all residences—and condo/apartment units—within an area bounded by Lawrence, Montrose, Sacramento, and North Branch of the Chicago River.)

June 2016: An article in *Manor News* (Summer 2016) reports on the status of the 4432 Mozart rehab and the recent demolition of other historic structures.

June 9, 2016: The RMIA Zoning Committee discusses five current projects (including two demolitions and the closure of the Summit Industries site on Lawrence Avenue). Committee members discuss a recent suggestion by the City of Chicago's Building Commissioner that the neighborhood should investigate local landmark protection. Committee members suggest that a full discussion of this matter be held at the next meeting, including a detailed survey of recent projects.

September 8, 2016: The RMIA Zoning Committee receives a report on the loss of "contributing buildings" in the Ravenswood Manor National Register District (i.e., between 2007 and 2016, the number of contributing structures dropped from 91% to 83%). Committee members discuss methods for addressing the demolition of historic structures. Committee members suggest: 1) an article for the Winter 2016 newsletter on current National Register District incentives and 2) a more detailed discussion on the neighborhood's potential eligibility as a local landmark district.





Front pages of the Spring 2016 and Winter 2016-17 issues of Manor News.

December 2016: A front page article in *Manor News* (Winter 2016-17) discusses some common questions relating to the existing National Register District. Another article notes the reorganization of RMIA's Zoning Committee to "address growing concerns about redevelopment issues in the neighborhood."

May 1, 2017: RMIA's Zoning Committee discusses several current projects, followed by a discussion of the process for a potential local landmark district. Committee members suggest that an outside consultant (i.e., not a resident) should prepare a research study on whether neighborhood would even qualify for landmark protection. Committee members vote that a consultant hiring should be recommended to RMIA Board at the Fall meeting, following discussions with potential consultants.

November 2017: RMIA Board votes to hire architectural historian Terry Tatum (former research director for the Commission on Chicago Landmarks) to prepare a research report on the neighborhood's potential to meet the designation criteria as a Chicago Landmark District.



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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.



Meeting **Tomorrow**

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Coming in 2018



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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