

## **Gifford Park Assoc. General Membership Meeting**

Sept. 20, 2018

Elgin History Museum

### **DATES TO NOTE**

- Sun., Sept. 23:** 11:00-3:00 Cemetery Walk at Bluff City Cemetery
- Tues., Sept. 26:** 7 p.m. planning meeting for a Fall Fest in late Oct. at Paul Bednar's (See HD report)
- Thurs., Oct. 18:** 7 p.m. GPA general membership meeting at Elgin History Museum which will center around the possibility of having a community garden at Channing Square (See HD report)
- Sat., Oct. 20:** Nightmare on Chicago St.

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Paul Bednar, Jim Berry, John Boline, Bill Briska, Barbara Evans, Mark Hendricks, Sue Kuester, Dan & Pat Miller, Mark & Glenna Preradovic and Warren Tejes

### **SECRETARY'S & TREASURER'S REPORTS**

After Dan Miller thanked Karen Bach for stepping in for Barbara to do the minutes of the Aug. 16 general membership meeting, they were unanimously approved.

Treasurer Pat Miller noted that GPA currently has \$123,683 in funds, \$41,383.44 of which is in checking. Not all house tour proceeds and expenditures are in, however. GPA's other major expense was the yearly renewal of our storage locker. Pat's report was also approved unanimously.

### **D.C. COOK MANSION, 105 N. Gifford St. (Dan Miller)**

Those who have not read the Daily Herald's article announcing the mansion's sale to Sam and Ramona Jones of Lithonia, Georgia, may do so by [CLICKING HERE](#).

The Jones' plan to be in Elgin next weekend to meet with their contractors to formulate plans for the residence. And they are aware that to qualify for the \$50,000 GPA pledged to commit to the rehabilitation of the property, they will have to submit a detailed proposal for how that money would be spent, which the GPA Board will then have to approve before the money can be released.

Needless to say, we're all hoping that eventually the mansion will come to more closely resemble the photographs of it in its heyday than those of the sorry, boarded-up state we've been looking at for so long.

### **HISTORIC DISTRICT (Paul Bednar paul@paulbednar.com )**

A note from one of the recipients of the Neighborhood Works Project thanking GPA for its part in helping her improve her property was passed around.

Early in the year we had discussed having a Fall Fest in October, but not until recently

have a few stepped up to possibly make it happen. The purpose of the fest is to involve kids in the Elgin Historic District, and to that end, a pumpkin decorating contest has been proposed. (Now to find someone willing to donate approximately 300 pumpkins.) Donna Leetz is looking into food, donating pumpkins and hay ride possibilities. While time is short, the general feeling is that we should go ahead to offer a fest the weekend of Oct. 29.

If you are willing to help plan the event, please contact Paul and, if possible, attend the 7 p.m. meeting at his home at 16 Rugby Pl. on Tuesday, Sept. 26.

At the Oct. 18th general membership meeting, people from the City Manager's office and representatives from community gardens will speak to GPA to see if there is interest in having a community garden at Channing Square, that plot of land where the east side YWCA used to be and which has sat vacant for the past 10 years. All three long-range plans for the City noted that based on national standards, the Elgin Historic District needed 11 more acres of open space. Nevertheless, the City eventually approved the sale of the land to a developer as well as his plan to build townhouses there. The 2008 financial crisis put the brakes on his plans, however. Please plan to attend this meeting, for if neighbors speak up and step up, we could possibly reduce the number of homes that may eventually be constructed there.

### **HISTORIC ELGIN HOUSE TOUR**

Kudos to Paul Bednar, who topped Barbara Evans' 2016 high of \$5,900 in sponsorships by \$1,000.

Mark Preradovic, who was in charge of ticket sales, was able to give us some preliminary data about this year's tour:

- Over 1,700 toured the homes;
- 500 toured on complimentary tickets;
- Over 100 of the 280+ docents attended the Friday night tour limited to them;
- 22 attended the Saturday night dinner at the Elgin Public House and heard Jerry

Turnquist talk about

Elgin's history

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

1. Though the winners of Chicago's Painted Ladies' contest are not made public until after the awards ceremony, we know that as was the case last year, seven of the ten winners are Elgin homes. (We know this because the winners are notified, and Elgin's winners in turn notified Dan Miller.)

2. Elgin's Tower Building was awarded the 2018 Landmark Illinois Richard H. Dreihaus Foundation preservation award for adaptive use. To read more about this, visit <https://www.dailyherald.com/business/20180809/elgin-tower-building-wins-preservation-award>

3. Those who sounded alarms about the removal of the memorial bricks at Lords Park

in conjunction with fountain renovation can rest easy. Because the bricks were in such a fragile state of disrepair, the decision was made to remake them, complete with the names of the donors that were originally on them.

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:50 p.m., surely one of our shorter ones.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Evans, Secretary