

**Gifford Park Association - General Membership Meeting
Elgin History Museum
August 15, 2019**

IN ATTENDANCE

Peggy Bernar, Barbara Evans, Dan & Pat Miller, EPD Officer Ramirez, Tom and Moe Lee, Paul Bednar, Mark Preradovic, Julie Schmitt, Bill Briska, Mike Haskins, Rob Adame

Welcome

R.O.P.E. REPORT (Officer Ramirez 847-289-2700)

Since last meeting in July,

- there were 259 calls for service which included 40 traffic stops. There was a report of a stolen car in the 400 block of North St.. Elgin did have its first homicide, ironically on the same night as our national night out. It was in the 1200 block of Fleetwood. Because of the cooperation of neighbors the man was in custody within 10 minutes. There are warrants for two more people that were involved.
- Our neighborhood national night out at division and college was a huge success. About 150 people attended. Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Leetz Funeral Home and Congregation Kneseth Israel cosponsored a block party at Division and N. Chapel. There was a petting zoo, food, popcorn and drinks as well as a bouncy house.
- On July 31st at the Sport Complex there was a charity softball challenge between Elgin Police and the Bear Family McDonald's. The \$2000 proceeds went to the Renz Center.

Upcoming events this month:

- Friday, July 23 at 3:30 there will be cookies with a cop at the McDonald's on Larkin.
- Monday, August 26 at 12 PM there will be luncheon live with Chief Lally on Facebook.
- On Wednesday, August 28 there will be an explorer's open house at 6 PM. Recall that they helped build our garden beds. An Explorer needs to be between 14 and 21 years old.

Officer Ramirez reminded the group that school is now in session and that we all need to slow down.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

It was moved by Barbara Evans and seconded by Mike Haskins to approve the minutes of the July meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Pat Miller reported the following

Checking Account	40,301.61
CDs	84,377.93
Total	\$124,679.54

Checking expenses include House tour's postcards and mailing for \$1149, the sign and pergola permits for the community garden \$170. The community garden sign was \$847 and we have deposited \$750 worth of house tour sponsorships.

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMITTEE (Paul Bednar paul@paulbednar.com)

Paul informed the group that he plans to have a neighborhood yard sale on the last weekend in September and the Fall Fest will be the Saturday before Halloween which is the 26th. The churches may partner with us like they did for national night out.

There's a lot of construction near the pocket park so no one can get in there to maintain it.

- Paul is looking for volunteers to care for the plantings on corners in the Historic District. Contact Paul if interested.
- Peggy Bernar suggested that we have a Christmas house decorating contest.
- The pergola for the community garden has been permitted so we will have a construction day there soon.
- Paul informed the group that the fall meeting to promote community gardens was not well attended.

ELGIN HISTORIC HOUSE TOUR (Mike Haskins 630-880-7276)

- House Tour is scheduled for September 7th and 8th
- Tour continues on schedule.
- We continue to look for sponsors.
- 725 letters to neighborhoods in the tour area were distributed. Men's shed volunteers helped deliver them.
- Posters are going up with five of the eight districts completed.
- There are very attractive T-shirts for sale showing a stained-glass window from 56 N. liberty. Dan modeled his for the group.
- The banners will go up soon at Chicago and Liberty and at the McClure mansion on Highland.
- We do have a billboard up on McLean and Big Timber.
- The electronic sign up for docents is almost complete. Very few phone calls had to be made.
- We do have the free use of the table at the farmers market for house walk

PORCHFEST (Peggy Bernar pegbernar@gmail.com)

Contact Peggy if you would like to help plan future Porch Fests. The recent one held at the McClure mansion was a huge success.

Quarterly Meetings???

A discussion was held on the topic of the possibility of having the Gifford Park Association meet quarterly instead of monthly. One suggestion was having every other meeting be a social event at a restaurant. We didn't used to meet in August as we held our kickoff potluck for the house walk instead. One person suggested not having a meeting in August and December and continuing with the April potluck. Peggy Bernar suggested that we should have a Christmas party and she likes having monthly meetings.

GPA Grants

We all received a notice form ABODE telling us of their small sparks grant program. Barbara Evans suggested that GPA should consider something similar. Barbara mentioned that she has been discussing the issue with Paul Kuester. It was suggested that we make a standing committee to fine tune the parameters. The Committee needs a chair. Since Paul Kuester was not there he was nominated. Paul Bednar feels we should include brick pavers for walks and driveways. Paul Kuester feels that architectural shingles should be included. Before the meeting Pat Miller wrote some ideas for discussion which were handed out at the meeting:

GPA RESTORATION GRANT PROGRAM – PROPOSAL

- Up to \$2,000 matching grant for approved projects. Reimbursement with paid receipts.
Only one grant per property per year; limited to two grants in a five year period
- GPA shall budget \$10,000 per year for this program
- grants shall be given: first applied-first served, until funds are used up.
- interested persons shall apply on forms provided by the GPA. Applications shall be reviewed and approved by a majority of the GPA board
- grant does not cover do-it-yourself labor
- properties shall be located within the Elgin Historic District to be eligible
- projects shall be exterior
- projects shall be architecturally/historically correct. For example porches, windows, stairs, railings, porch posts, newel posts, balusters, trim, wood storms/screens, doors, porch aprons, soffits, facias, cornices, masonry repair, masonry cleaning. Roofs will not be eligible unless of original materials (wood shingle, clay tile, slate, terne metal, etc)

- painting shall be considered only for properties in good repair and with architecturally appropriate features.
- priority shall be given to projects visible from the street: front façade, side facades, or street facades on corner properties.
- Property shall be owner-occupied, four living units or less.
- Shade trees 40 foot high or more at maturity may be eligible. No other landscape plants or garden structures in ground or above ground shall be eligible.

Watch for an announcement of a meeting to discuss the topic.

Channing Square Development

Julie Schmitt reminded the group that there have been discussions at the city regarding building homes on the Channing Y site at Division and Channing. She suggested that we all lobby our city councilmen against the idea. We all agreed at our last meeting that it is not something that we want.

Downsizing Grants

Paul Bednar reminded the group that the downsizing grants are currently funded with TIF money so most of our neighborhood is not eligible. We all need to lobby with our city council to get them to fund it in another way.

50/50 Grants

Dan informed the group that for years the amount of the grant money was \$200,000, Half was for the 50/50 program and half for the 75/25 program. This past year they cut it to \$100,000 again splitting it between the two grants. Several 50/50 grants did not get funded as there was not enough money allocated. Dan urged the group to lobby their city councilmen to get the amount back up to previous levels.

Plaques

Pat reminded the group that GPA has a program where we will fund half of the cost of getting a house plaque up to \$100. Rebecca Hunter (rebeccahunter1216@gmail.com) will do the research for people at a nominal cost. She also suggested that we make a brochure to hand out to encourage people to participate in our great unveiling program.

Instagram

Peggy Bernar started an Instagram page for GPA and she informed the group that it has had 500 likes. It contains mostly pictures of our wonderful homes.

Adjourn

Tom Lee made a motion to adjourn and Moe Lee seconded it. It passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted Dan Miller and Barbara Evans