

## GPA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

February 17, 2022

Via Zoom

### DATES TO NOTE

Thurs., Feb. 24, 7 pm: Grant Task Force Committee at the Elgin History Museum [EHM]

Mon., March 7, 7 pm: Historic Elgin House Tour Steering Committee at EHM

Thurs., March 17, 6 pm: Joint Historic District, Membership & Publicity Committees at EHM

Thurs., March 17, 7 pm: General GPA Membership meeting at EHM

### IN VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE

Paul Bednar, Bill Briska, Barbara Evans, Tyler Grace, Janine Hnatusko, Sarah Hunt, Laura Knoerr, Paul & Sue Kuester, Trish LaFleur, Dan & Pat Miller, Mark & Glenna Preradovic, EPD Sgt. Rick DeMierre

### CALL TO ORDER

New GPA President Paul Bednar called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and spoke for all when he expressed relief that thanks to Trish LaFleur and Zoom, we didn't have to venture out in a snowstorm tonight.

### R.O.P.E. REPORT

Sgt. DeMierre, standing in for Officer Payne, reported that all is good in the neighborhood. He did remind all that leaving a car running unattended and unlocked is an invitation to theft. He also noted that the EPD's community events that were put on hold because of COVID will soon resume and stressed that those in the Explorer Program will again be able to help with the East Side Community Garden. And as in the past, they'll be available to help with traffic control at house tour time. We simply need to alert Officer Payne to request them.

Asked to detail the Explorer Program, he explained that it is one of the few structured programs in the U.S. for teens who are interested in some aspect of law enforcement. As a part of the program, they are required to do volunteer work in the community and report for it in uniform. As to how teens are chosen, school resource officers publicize the program and urge those interested to apply for it.

### SECRETARY'S & TREASURER'S REPORTS

The minutes of GPA's Jan. 20 general membership meeting were unanimously approved. So, too, was new treasurer Laura Knoerr's report that to date, GPA has \$59,125.70 in its checking account and \$87,324.98 in four CDs for a total of \$146,450.68.

### STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### 1. Historic District (Sarah Hunt)

Sarah is focusing on having one major event per quarter to bring people together: a spring cleanup, a July food fest, a fall festival and a December holiday party. Specific dates have not yet been set, but she is hoping that different people would volunteer to be in charge of each. Any who are interested are encouraged to attend the next committee meeting, which will be at the EHM at 6 pm on March 17.

## 2. Membership (Janine Hnatusko)

In preparation for an updated directory, all GPA members will receive an email asking for permission to include street and email addresses as well as phone numbers. Those who do not want this contact information listed will need to reply to opt out.

In the past month, three properties have been sold in the Elgin Historic District [EHD], two of which are single-family homes. Welcome letters have been sent to the owners.

In addition to information about GPA and Elgin's historic architecture, the gift bags being prepared for new residents in the EHD will include a \$10 downtown gift certificate and a small gift related to home improvement.

Those interested in joining this committee are urged to attend the March 17 meeting that will precede the general membership meeting.

## 3. Publicity (Trish LaFleur)

In addition to continuing to update GPA's website, Trish has designed a postcard to be sent out once the new GPA grant program is finalized. It will also include information about other grant programs, such as the plaque program and the Great Unveiling.

## 4. Historic Elgin House Tour (Matt Martin)

No report

## OTHER REPORTS

### 1. Architectural Grant Committee (Pat Miller)

Work still needs to be done before this becomes a grant proposal that can be brought to the membership for its approval. Thus those interested in making it become a reality are urged to attend the Feb. 24th committee meeting at 7 pm at the history museum.

It is important to note that those applying for this grant to restore architectural elements to a property does not exclude one from applying for other grants.

### 2. Dan Miller is working on a memorial for GPA founders Chuck & Audrey Behrens.

### 3. DNA's Neighborhood Outreach Committee (Barbara Evans)

Mikala Larson, Elgin's Sustainability Coordinator, noted that the City will have demonstration beds for native plants adjacent to the East Side Community garden beds.

She also noted that the City has 500 trees available at no cost to residents for tree banks. While the City will plant them, it will be up to residents to keep them watered. The deadline for applying for spring plantings is April 15, and for fall ones, August 15. Availability is on a first-come, first-service basis, so those who are interested should see [www.cityofelgin.org/467/Tree-Planting](http://www.cityofelgin.org/467/Tree-Planting) for further information and the application.

## MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

### 1. Review of GPA's Constitution and By-Laws

Aware that somethings, such as the details about membership fees, are outdated, Paul Bednar and Barbara Evans will review the constitution and by-laws and recommend possible changes. After the meeting, Pat Miller agreed to join them.

## 2. The Funds Earmarked for the D.C. Cook Mansion

When Sam and Ramona Jones purchased this historic property at 105 N. Gifford St. in the fall of 2018, Dan Miller alerted them to the fact that GPA had earmarked \$50,000 for removing the additions on the main building and putting back the original porches. And knowing Dan, we know that he made a convincing case for doing so. Nevertheless, because they needed the space afforded by the additions, they were not interested in GPA's offer. Recently Dan checked back with them to see if they had changed their minds. As they hadn't, Dan moved that GPA remove the \$50,000 earmarked for the work. Seconded by Barbara Evans, the motion passed unanimously.

## 3. GPA's Great Unveiling Grant

After discussion, all agreed that this grant that is currently available for the removal of substitute siding should be separate from the grant that, when finalized, will be for the restoration of architectural details, especially as applying for one does not preclude applying for the other.

Further discussion ensued about the \$1,000 of the grant. All agreed that even with GPA members doing the removal gratis, this amount was too little an incentive to tempt anyone to undertake all the work required after the siding is removed, especially as construction costs have skyrocketed. As the City offered a grant of \$5,000 for this years ago, Dan Miller moved that we increase the grant to that figure. Seconded by Mark Preradovic, the motion to make each Great Unveiling Grant \$5,000 was approved unanimously.

## 4. Support for the Heritage Commission's Amended Elgin Design Guideline Manual

GPA's Board of Directors unanimously approved the letter Paul Bednar wrote in support of the Commission's application for a National Alliance of Preservation Commission's Best Practices: Protection Award for its amended manual.

## 5. Traffic circle at Division and Gifford streets

Glenna Preradovic called our attention to the fact that the City has hired a consultant to analyze possible ways to improve this traffic circle. Seeking community input will be a part of the process.

## ADJOURNMENT

After expressing his hope that GPA continue to offer Zoom links for those unable to attend meetings in person, Paul called for a motion to adjourn at 8:05 pm, precisely an hour after calling the meeting to order. The motion was made, seconded and approved by all.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Evans, Secretary