

GPA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
January 20, 2022
7 p.m. at Elgin History Museum and via Zoom

DATES TO NOTE

- The Jan. 31 Historic House Tour Steering Committee Meeting has been postponed.
- Thurs., Feb. 3, 7 pm: GPA Grant Committee meeting at the history museum
- Thurs., Feb. 17, 7 pm: Monthly general membership meeting at the history museum
- Thurs., Feb. 17, 6 pm: Combined meeting of the Historic District and Membership committees at the history museum (All interested are invited to attend)

IN ATTENDANCE

Karen Bach, Paul Bednar, Bill Briska, Amanda Carlson, Bill Decker, EPD Officer DeMierre, Barbara Evans, Tyler Grace, Janine Hnatusko, Sarah Hunt, Hans Klemmer, Laura Knoerr, Sue & Paul Kuester, Trish LaFleur, Liz Marston, Matt Martin, Dan & Pat Miller, Mark & Glenna Preradovic

CALL to ORDER

After calling the meeting to order, President Dan Miller thanked those who had kept GPA humming during his absence, particularly Trish LaFleur, who took charge of the November meeting, and Paul Bednar, who oversaw the installation of wreaths on EHD signs. In turn, all in attendance welcomed Dan back, amazed that he could physically be present.

R.O.P.E. REPORT

Standing in for the Elgin Historic District's R.O.P.E. Officer Payne was Officer DeMierre, who alerted us to the catalytic converter thefts that have been occurring throughout the city, including at car dealerships. Being alert and calling in any instance someone is seen under a car in a parking lot will go a long way to reduce this crime, as will calling in any suspicious activity. Officer DeMierre said to contact him at 847-289-2507 to make such reports. He also reminded us not to leave an unlocked running car unattended.

Because the case is still under investigation, he couldn't give us anymore information beyond what the EPD had already released about the shooting that took place in the 0-100 block of Hill Street around 9 pm on Dec. 29th. Dan Miller recently sent out that detailed report to all on the GPA mailing list. If you didn't get it and want it, email him at dmiller155@aol.com. In short, it was an isolated incident between 2 non-Elgin men that stemmed from a previous encounter. According to EPD Chief Lalley, "The quick actions of our patrol officers coupled with the tireless work by our detectives resulted in quick arrests." The court dates for the two men were set for Jan. 19 and 21.

SECRETARY'S & TREASURER'S REPORTS

The minutes of our last meeting, Nov. 18, were unanimously approved.

So, too, was treasurer Pat Miller's report that currently, GPA's funds total \$145,829.80, with \$59,329.79 in checking and \$87,310.43 distributed among four CDs.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Historic District

Dan thanked Amanda Carlson, the outgoing chair, for all the work she'd done to plan events/activities and bemoaned the fact that COVID had prevented them from being carried out. Sarah Hunt, the soon-to-be-appointed chair, reported that all of Amanda's work had not been in vain as she was working on rescheduling some of the activities. Her goal is to also have several large events. Because many activities can attract potential members, Sarah has been working with Janine.

2. Membership (Janine Hnatusko, Chair)

Currently 279 households make up the GPA membership.

Janine displayed the tote bags she's considering ordering to kill two birds with one stone. In addition to containing materials to be delivered to new EHD residents, hopefully they'll be used for shopping and, with the GPA logo imprinted on them, serve to increase awareness of GPA. Materials will include membership forms, EHD walking tour booklets, architectural coloring books, and other related material about Elgin and historic preservation. Jen Fukala, Executive Director of DNA will detail what materials they can offer for this purpose at an upcoming Neighborhood Outreach meeting, which Janine will attend.

Though GPA's April potluck is a 40-year tradition, Janine noted that because of Omnicron, it might be prudent to postpone it until we can have it outside. No decision will be made until much closer to the April meeting date, however.

3. Elgin Historic House Tour (Matt Martin)

The kick-off meeting for the 2022 tour scheduled for Jan. 31st has been postponed. When it is rescheduled, all will be informed.

The final numbers are in: the 2021 tour's gross was \$17,597 and its net \$10,600. Interestingly, the profit was close to that of the 2019 tour. Because attendance was about half of what it has been, expenses were less, in large part because 41% of the attendees opted to use a digital tour booklet. Also far less was spent on the after party as it was limited to steering committee members, house chairs and homeowners. This was also a record year for sponsorships.

OTHER REPORTS

1. GPA Grant Committee (Pat Miller)

The postponed November meeting has been rescheduled for Thursday, Feb. 3 at 7 pm at the history museum. Finalizing the parameters for the rehab grants will be the focus of the meeting. Because of the loss of several committee members, all interested in this means of putting the money in GPA's treasury to work are urged to attend.

In the brainstorming session at the end of the meeting, Sarah Hunt asked that the committee consider include making just painting house exteriors eligible for this grant because the City's 50/50 grant includes painting only if it is part of rehabilitating architectural features. Given the expense of painting a house, she added, financial help would go a long way in encouraging people to undertake it and thus improve the streetscapes.

2. East Side Neighborhood Garden

Sarah Hunt reported that 15 people are currently on the waiting list for one of the 39 individual garden beds on the vacant land where the Channing YMCA once stood. Thirty of the

beds are 4 x 12; nine built this past summer by the Eagle Scouts are 4 x 20. So successful were the larger beds that more may be added for this coming summer. Those interested in more information or in just seeing what these garden beds add to the EHD streetscape should visit <https://ourgarden2019.wixsite.com/website>.

3. Downtown Neighborhood Assoc.'s Neighborhood Outreach Committee (Barbara Evans)

As Elgin's only dog park is on the far-west side, SWAN is urging the City to make the public park off Hwy. 31 and by-pass 20 a dog park.

DNA is rebuilding its Farmer's Market work group and is seeking members for its committee. Anyone interested in being involved should contact Executive Director Jen Fukala at 847-488-1456.

DNA sends out one comprehensive email weekly every Thursday. Known as the "Downtown Elgin Spotlight," it features local events, special offers, new business announcements, community updates and more. To sign up to receive it, visit <https://www.downtownelgin.com/join-our-mailing-list/>

One of the possible topics at the 2nd Summit of the board members of neighborhood groups adjacent to downtown Elgin is how to increase active participation. The date for the summit has not yet been set though sometime in late March is being considered.

The representatives of the neighborhood associations adjacent to downtown Elgin are extending an invitation to their members (and to anyone else reading these minutes) to occasionally visit each other's monthly meetings.

Northeast Neighborhood Association [NENA]: 1st Thursday at 7 pm in the first-floor conference room of The Centre, 100 Symphony way

Southwest Area Neighbors [SWAN]: 3rd Monday at 6:30 pm (social), 7 pm (business) at Zion Lutheran Church, 330 Griswold St.

Gifford Park Association [GPA]: 3rd Thursday at 7 pm at the Elgin History Museum, 360 Park St.

4. The Chuck & Audrey Behrens' Memorial

Dan Miller reiterated the information about the funds available for this and his suggestion for a commemorative plaque that have been detailed in the minutes of the past two general membership meetings. He then asked that someone volunteer to take charge of this.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Election of Officers for 2022

As there were no nominations from the floor, Bill Briska moved that the slate of officers be approved. Seconded by Mark Preradovic, the motion passed unanimously. Thus congratulations to the following:

President Paul Bednar

Past President Dan Miller

Vice-President Pat Miller

Secretary Barbara Evans

Treasurer Laura Knoerr

Members-at-Large Tyler Grace and Glenna Preradovic

2. Appointment of Standing Committee Chairs

Barbara Evans moved that the newly elected Board approve the appointments for chairs of the two vacant standing committees. Seconded by Paul Bednar, the Board then unanimously approved them. Subsequently the members present unanimously voted to accept the Board's recommendations. Thus congratulations to the following:

Chair of the Historic District Committee Sarah Hunt

Chair of Publicity Trish LaFleur

Matt Martin and Janine Hnatusko, the chairs of the Historic House Tour and Membership, respectively, were continuing and did not need to be re-appointed.

3. Newly elected treasurer Laura Knoerr noted that she would be meeting with Pat Miller to effect a smooth transition. Laura also will explore the possibilities of putting GPA's accounts online. And she readily accepted Bill Briska's offer to advise her about various programs.

Newly appointed Publicity Chair Trish LaFleur announced that she was working on redesigning the GPA website.

BRAINSTORMING

Paul Bednar's suggestion that GPA increase the number of Great Unveilings as well as the money for them was the focus of the brainstorming session held at the end of the meeting. In short, there was much enthusiasm for this as well as for having a workshop that would detail what is involved in removing substitute siding from homes and what the funding would cover. The suggestion that a knowledgeable GPA member act as an advisor to the participating homeowner also met with approval.

ADJOURNMENT

After thanking Glenna for providing the delicious banana bread for us to munch on, Dan Miller asked for a motion to adjourn. Made and seconded, it was approved unanimously.

AFTER THE MEETING CHATTER

Several opined that all general membership meetings should be available via Zoom for those who for whatever reason could not attend in person. Because this meeting was Zoomed, three who were out-of-state were able to attend.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Evans, Secretary