

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

October 27, 2022

A meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was held on October 27, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the First Floor Community Room at the River Forest Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue.

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Chairman Franek, Commissioners Krusinski, Muhr, Graham-White, Forehand and Raino-Ogden.

Absent: Commissioner Saeger.

Also Present: Assistant to the Village Administrator Matt Walsh

II. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 29, 2022

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Raino-Ogden and SECONDED by Commissioner Forehand to approve the meeting minutes for September 29, 2022 as presented.

AYES: Chairman Franek, Commissioners Krusinski, Muhr, Graham-White, Forehand and Raino-Ogden.

NAYS: None.

Motion Passes.

III. PUBLIC TESTIMONY

No public testimony was heard.

IV. PRESENTATION BY FRANK LIPO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF OAK PARK & RIVER FOREST ON LOCAL ADVOCACY EFFORTS

Frank Lipo introduced himself to the Commission and explained his role with the Oak Park River Forest Historical Society and Museum. Mr. Lipo previously served on the Oak Park Preservation Commission and is familiar with grassroots efforts to preserve properties. Over the past few months Mr. Lipo and others have met to consider the creation of a group tentatively called Preservation Oak Park. The group's immediate plan is to divide efforts into three subgroups; the education committee, sustainability committee and advocacy committee.

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Mr. Lipo shared a draft prospectus with the Commission, and stated the goal of the group has been to brainstorm new ideas for preservation and development. The name and details of the group are still being determined. Mr. Lipo observed that preservation issues only get attention when there are controversial proposals.

Mr. Lipo stated his goal is for the group to avoid the perception of being an obstructionist to specific developments, and to build positive support for preservation over time.

Chairman Franek thanked Mr. Lipo for his work and stated that River Forest's challenge is public education and engagement. Chairman Franek agreed that long term advocacy is a better method than opposition to specific proposals. Chairman Franek mentioned collective efforts of regional historic preservation commissions, and Mr. Lipo noted the efforts of Landmarks Illinois' Suburban Unity Alliance to bring different suburbs together.

Chairman Franek stated that Oak Park, River Forest, and Riverside have exceptional architecture and that a collective effort would be valuable.

Mr. Lipo noted the different perspectives between Oak Park and River Forest residents and urged consideration for individuals advocating for preservation in other villages.

Member Graham-White asked for more information on how the Oak Park Preservation Commission functions. Mr. Lipo explained that the Oak Park group has evolved over the decades and stated there are three historical districts in Oak Park. The Historical Preservation Commission can block demolition of contributing properties in the districts, however the Village Board can overturn any decision.

Oak Park also has an Architectural Review Committee that can delay renovations to certain properties in Oak Park, but remains primarily advisory. Chairman Franek noted that two members of the River Forest Commission previously attended meetings as members of the public. Mr. Lipo agreed that the advocacy group could be a way for individuals to get involved.

Commissioner Raino-Ogden agreed that education is important and mentioned some information he has about potential significant properties.

Mr. Lipo stated that communication between the interested groups is helpful for increasing awareness and noted that social connections and the history of residents is often as important as the architecture for preservation.

Commissioner Forehand shared that he volunteered with a group named Peerless Rockville in Maryland that has a successful model for education and engagement in preservation.

Mr. Lipo explained that there have been some requests by Preservation Oak Park members to create a formal non-profit that lobbies for certain causes, however the group wants to build a basic foundation first. There has already been success in networking and growing interest among members.

Chairman Franek compared the slow growth of the group to a new homeowner living in the space for some time before making renovations. The Commission thanked Frank Lipo for attending.

V. DISCUSSION REGARDING PROMOTION OF RIVER FOREST ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORY

Chairman Franek encouraged all members to share any ideas they have, even if they are new members.

VI. DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL WAYS TO PROTECT SIGNIFICANT PROPERTIES

Commissioner Muhr stated he would help work with staff on an interactive map as discussed at prior meetings.

VII. DISCUSSION OF PROCESS FOR HISTORICAL SURVEY REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS

Commissioner Raino-Ogden asked about certain properties being added. Chairman Franek detailed some of the past discussions on the topic, including discussion on mid-century modern homes.

Assistant Walsh showed the Commission an existing form on the Village website for requesting changes to the survey. Chairman Franek asked Assistant Walsh to check with the Village Attorney regarding revisions to the Historical Survey.

Commissioner Raino-Ogden shared an idea about collecting oral histories from his block at block party.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

IX. ADJOURNMENT


A MOTION was made by Commissioner Raino-Ogden and SECONDED by Commissioner Muhr to adjourn the October 27, 2022 meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission at 7:55 p.m.

AYES: Chairman Franek, Commissioners Krusinski, Muhr, Graham-White, Forehand and Raino-Ogden.

NAYS: None.

Motion Passes.

Respectfully submitted:



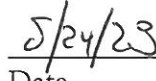
Matt Walsh
Assistant to the Village Administrator

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Approved:



David Franek, Chairman
Historic Preservation Commission



Date