



MEMORANDUM

TO: Rita Schneider, President
Lombard Historical Commission

FROM: Jennifer Henaghan, AICP, Senior Planner JSH

DATE: January 17, 2012

SUBJECT: 2011 Annual Report

Attached is the draft 2011 Historical Commission Annual Report. This will be voted upon at the January 17 meeting and forwarded to the Village Board.

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LOMBARD HISTORICAL COMMISSION

January 17, 2012

Village President, William Mueller
and Village Board of Trustees
255 E. Wilson Avenue
Lombard, IL 60148

Dear President Mueller and Village Board of Trustees,

The Lombard Historical Commission is required to submit to the corporate authorities, a written report in January of each year, to inform the Village of the activities of the Commission during the past year. We submit the following to fulfill that commitment.

As required by Ordinance, the Lombard Historical Commission met on the usual quarterly basis during 2011.

This year, the Commission welcomed a new member, Mr. Richard "Dick" Anstee who has taken over the finance responsibilities for the Commission. Mr. Anstee brings a great deal of financial experience and Lombard history with him. With the Village in the process of changing their budget cycle to the calendar year, two budget proposals were submitted; 1) June – December 2012 to complete the current budget and 2) calendar year 2013. As in the past, the budget is comprised of Commission budget items as well as maintenance items for the Victorian Cottage and grounds and the grounds of the Sheldon Peck Homestead. The Commission is also the "recommending body for the maintenance and monitoring of the Lombard Cemetery".

The new website which was planned and designed in the fall of 2010 was reviewed and approved by the commission in January. The site, which is now live on the Village website contains the Commission Ordinance, a meeting schedule, map of local landmark sites and the museums, a history of the commission and info on the Illinois Preservation Agency's Tax Assessment Freeze Program. It also contains procedure for property owners to apply for Local Landmark status and a link to the Historical Society website. Several members of the Commission were involved in this project along with Jennifer Henaghan, our CDD liaison.

In January, 2011, the Commission received a request from the Community Development Department to review the Village of Lombard Downtown Plan. Commissioners were provided a copy of the plan and asked to make comments and suggestions regarding ways to recognize historic sites within the downtown area. The commission members were happy to be a part of the recommendation process of the plan.

Also in January of 2011, the Historical Commission and the Historical Society made a Power Point presentation to the Village Board of Trustees, President Mueller, Manager Hulseburg and other Village officials regarding the activities of both the Commission and Society and how they work together and complement each other. The history of both was included, as was the maintenance of the properties, and the fundraising efforts of the Historical Society. The purpose was to acquaint new Village Board

members and others with the operations of the Society and financial involvement of the Village. It was pointed out that all of the programs of the Society are financed by Society fundraisers only.

The National Register Committee which includes Rita Schneider, Patricia Poskocil and Jeanne Schultz Angel (Historical Society Executive Director) has continued to work on the Sheldon Peck Homestead application to the National Park Service National Register of Historic Places, with writers, Susan Benjamin and Jean Follett. The application was submitted to Springfield in April and the presentation to the Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council was scheduled for September 9, 2011 in Chicago. Members of the Historical Commission, Historical Society, Village Officials and Peck family members attended the meeting. Although the writers and members of the NR Committee were in contact with the State staff in Springfield, it was apparent that State staff did not assist in the manner normally assigned to their office. The application was deferred to a later date. Since that time, the materials that were said to be missing from the application have been gathered and a new application is being submitted for the second time. Presentation may be as early as March, 2011.

In the meantime, the Sheldon Peck Homestead has gained national prominence by being named to the National Park Service Underground Railroad Study "Network to Freedom". This award is based on many hours of research into the abolitionist and temperance activities of Sheldon Peck and his family, including the Homestead as a stop on the Underground Railroad. It is the only such site to be named thus in the Chicago area. This is a tremendous honor and is also the work of members of the Commission in combined efforts with the Historical Society.

There were two sites designated as "Local Landmarks" in 2010. Early in 2011, the Commission reviewed designs and materials for commemorative plaques to be installed on these and future sites so designated. The signs were installed by the Public Works department, on both the Dairy Queen Sign at Main and Maple and the Angst home at 125 E. Washington. These are the first designations to be made with more to come.

In June of 2011 a Local Landmarks Committee was formed of commission members with Tami Urish as Chairman. The subcommittee reports to the Historical Commission but meets separately, with appropriate notice, agendas and minutes posted on the Village website calendar. Its purpose is to seek out and investigate historic sites, structures and other objects that have a special historic significance to the Village. Applications of property owners wishing to be considered for LL status are reviewed and the committee can work with property owners to file the proper papers. The Community Development Department will also work with property owners. The committee's motions of recommendation are sent to the Commission which will act on the recommendations to hold a public hearing to review the possible designee. If a positive vote occurs in the public hearing, the recommendation will then be sent to the Village Board for approval. There are currently 4 possible designees to be reviewed in January. The Local Landmarks Committee is investigating Local Landmark Districting with a possible site in the St. Charles Road business area.

The Historical Commission Ordinance {32.079} was amended by the Village Board of Trustees in 2011 to include "written approval of the property owners shall not be required in the case of an 'abandoned cemetery' as said term is defined in 65 ILCS 5/11-49-I(d), in the event that the owners of the abandoned cemetery are unknown, or no longer in existence". With this amendment, the Commission members will consider the Lombard Cemetery for Local Landmark status at their January 17, 2012 meeting.

Members of the Commission continue to monitor the Lombard Cemetery as members of the ad-hoc Lombard Cemetery Committee. There are plans to create a walk to the west gate and a sign designating the park on the west side as the "Babcock's Grove Memorial Garden". There has been some damage to the gravestones in the cemetery. Three stones have been damaged by the lawn maintenance personnel and Kapsa Monument has been asked for an invoice that can be passed on to the maintenance crew for reimbursement of repair cost.

In October of 2011, Public Works Director, Carl Goldsmith and Community Development Director, William Heniff, reviewed the proposed new Use Agreement for the use and maintenance of the Museum properties to reflect construction of the addition to the carriage house at the Victorian Cottage. It was suggested that at least 2 commission members be involved as the Historical Commission is a part of the original agreement and subsequent amendments. Corrine Flemm and Ed Seagraves, co-chairmen of the Society Capital Campaign reviewed the plans for the addition. The addition will add much needed archive space and space for additional exhibits and group presentations, particularly school groups. The space will be handicap accessible and provide restrooms which are not available now. The Commission approved the plans by motion and encouraged the Society to move forward with the plans.

The Personnel representative on the Commission, Patricia Poskocil, reported that the Executive Director of the Society continues to move the Society forward and increase the vision of the Society to the public. She works efficiently and effectively with her part time staff. The creation of new programs and new ideas and her efforts in enlisting other organizations into joint programs for the benefit of the village is excellent. The visits to both Museums continue to increase as they have for the last few years.

In October of 2011, a proposal was presented to commission members to institute a Lombard Heritage Award which is meant to honor individuals, organizations, projects and programs who demonstrate a commitment to excellence in historic preservation. There are 8 categories to which one of the above might be nominated and the award would only be given in years when a suitable nomination is received. Nominations will be called for in beginning in April with a deadline of May 31. Watch for the announcement of this special award program.

We continue to rely on Jennifer Henaghan of the Community Development Department as our liaison to the Village. She is invaluable in the assistance she lends to the Commission and this Chair.

As in the past, your Historical Commission is very proud of its work and accomplishments. We strive to meet our primary goal of preserving historic sites and artifacts in Lombard and feel that we continue to assist in drawing visitors and tourism to Lombard's heritage. We have accomplished much this year, and look forward to another year of challenges. The continued success of our museums, the further national recognition of the Sheldon Peck Homestead and additional "Landmark" sites, promoting the historic heritage of Lombard sites and people, lending a hand in all things historic in Lombard. These are our challenges in the future.

Sincerely,

Rita M. Schneider, Chair
Tami Urish, Vice-Chair
Lyn Myers, Secretary
Richard Anstee
John Egan
Thomas Fetters
Jack Jones
Eileen Mueller
Marcy Novak
Brigitte O'Brien
Patricia Poskocil