

MINUTES
VILLAGE OF HINSDALE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

January 12, 2016

Memorial Hall – Memorial Building, 19 East Chicago Avenue, Hinsdale
5:00 P.M.

Commissioner Bohnen called the meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission to order at 5:00 p.m. on January 12, 2016 in Memorial Hall in the Memorial Building, 19 East Chicago Avenue, Hinsdale IL.

Present: Commissioner Harloe-Mowery, Commissioner Janice D'Arco and
Commissioner Bohnen

Absent: Commissioner Gonzalez

Also Present: Chan Yu, Village Planner, Suzanne Ostrovsky, Management Analyst
and (via conference call) Ryan Rossi, Revize Senior Account Manager

Minutes

Commissioner Mowery introduced the minutes from the November 10, 2015 meeting. Commissioner Bohnen asked Chan to strike the word “municipal” in the first sentence under “Fence Regulations”. Commissioner Bohnen made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Commissioner D'Arco seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion – Map Project

Commissioner Mowery asked Chan to introduce the first agenda item.

Chan explained staff has arranged a conference call/webinar with Revize for the meeting. Revize is the company who helped develop the Village's new website. Chan expressed that he was unable to answer all of the HPC's questions regarding the future historic interactive map. Therefore, he wanted to give the HPC an opportunity to see the services and ask questions directly to Revize.

Ryan, from Revize asked the HPC if the purpose of the map is to show where the historic homes are located in Hinsdale.

Commissioner Mowery replied correct.

Ryan, shows via webinar, several examples of maps Revize has created for other municipalities. He mentioned the amount of “pin points” are unlimited. It uses Google Maps software, but clicking on a pin point will bring out an information box using their content management software. The information box is where the HPC can customize. Examples of the content include pictures, directions and information. A powerful tool Ryan showed is the

map expand button. By clicking it, it opens up a new tab with a full screen of the map, with all the other additional maps the Village may have on the bottom of the screen.

Suzanne asked Ryan if he could show examples of other municipalities that have images they uploaded, to get an idea of what they look like.

Ryan could not think of any at the moment. However, he explained again the content management software allows for full customization.

Commissioner Mowery asked if the image can be directly from Google Maps (street view).

Ryan replied it is an option to use the photo from its street view function.

Commissioner Mowery explained since this is in the early stages, why not use what is shown on Google.

Ryan replied yes, some choose this, and some choose to use their own images.

Commissioner Mowery explained the HPC does have additional information they'd like help with.

Commissioner D'Arco asked how long it takes to setup this portion of the page.

Ryan replied it would take a day or two; but the timing is more dependent on the information collection process on the Village's end.

Commissioner D'Arco asked so the HPC would essentially just need to send a database.

Commissioner Mowery reviewed that the information collected by the HPC is about 75% completed.

Additional discussion in regards to the spreadsheet "data" collection ensued.

Suzanne asked Ryan, in terms of process, would Revize set this up for the Village; and would it be visible prior to publishing on the web.

Ryan responded he is pretty sure that is the case.

Suzanne mentioned that she spoke with Thomas (Revize liaison to Village) and that was the case. Further, Thomas also indicated this service is part of the contract with the Village, at no additional cost.

Ryan reiterated a map, as shown is not a problem. The only way a fee would be necessary is if it was truly custom and a unique webpage.

Suzanne asked if staff is responsible for populating the map.

Ryan replied yes, the pin points are by the Village.

Chan asked if the data pin points are referenced through an Excel spreadsheet.

Ryan responded he is not 100 percent sure, but will ask Thomas for confirmation.

Commissioner Mowery asked if the Village has any maps on its website, utilizing the tools as shown today.

Suzanne responded no, but it may in the future understanding how easy it is now.

Commissioner D'Arco expressed concern over the quality of the pictures sometimes displayed by Google street view. For example, some photos may have objects blocking the view of the house. However, she also understands how much time it would take to use individual photos.

Commissioner Mowery asked if the HPC or Village needs permission from the homeowner to display their home on the website.

Suzanne replied that is an interesting question, since Google is essentially doing it. She also recommended possibly sending the homeowner a notification letter.

Commissioner D'Arco asked for clarification of what staff needs to do and what Revize will do.

Ryan clarified that the HPC/ Village will essentially provide the data and Revize will provide the map.

Commissioner Bohnen asked Suzanne, if the HPC explores third party vendors, such as the Dwelling Society, and if it's as easy to integrate into the website.

Suzanne replied yes, according to Revize, any third party site can be done through "iframe", which essentially integrates into the rest of the webpage.

Ryan verified correct, Revize can embed the code into the webpage.

Additional discussion in regards to software and browser compatibility ensued.

Suzanne reiterated what Ryan reviewed is a free service. She also reviewed a third party company called Dwelling Society, referred by Commissioner Bohnen. She mentioned a few notes while exploring its website; 1) it's content heavy, 2) the interactive map is also Google based, but maps homes in the Chicagoland region and 3) there is an area where people can comment on the home, mimicking a social network site.

Commissioner Bohnen expressed that he is not a particular fan of “Zestimates” or Zillow, as shown in the Dwelling Society website.

Suzanne also pointed out the ability for anyone to comment on the home, may result in losing focus on the message the HPC would like to convey through the webpage.

Commissioner Bohnen explained his concern of the website is to keep it academic, rather than a real estate site.

Commissioner Mowery agreed.

Commissioner Bohnen expressed that the Dwelling Society does not give the feel that he’s looking for.

Commissioner Mowery agreed, and added the platform that Ryan presented is a step in the right direction to get something up and running. Perhaps, since it will likely be an ongoing project, the Historic Society may be willing to add information, as presented in the “map and tour” website Suzanne showed.

Suzanne showed one last example of an interactive map that Oak Park uses for its historic landmarks. She mentioned that the format is the same as what Ryan showed in the webinar.

Commissioner Mowery said perfect, and believes it’s a great start for the webpage. She asked Suzanne who’s been working on the current Village website.

Suzanne responded, the new website features easy edits by staff, including Chan and herself who have access to update it.

Chan stated that he’s expressed early on that he’s happy to compile the data from the HPC into a master sheet. And from there, Revize can geocode it into an interactive map.

Commissioner Mowery said the HPC needs to decide on what information should be provided in the text box “pop up” after a user clicks the pin point on the map.

Commissioner Bohnen replied the age and architecture style is important. There is also information from the books that may be incorporated later.

Commissioner Mowery added, we could consider adding former homeowners if he/she is a historic figure to Hinsdale.

Commissioner Bohnen agreed.

Commissioner D’Arco asked for next steps clarification, and if that includes sending a spreadsheet to Chan.

Commissioner Mowery and Bohnen replied correct, send current spreadsheets to Chan.

Fence Regulations

Commissioner Bohnen informed to the HPC that he appeared before the Board of Trustees, and the consensus seemed to be that fences should go back into the Zoning Code from the municipal code. Some of the Trustees felt that it made sense to have a formula for the suggested fence height. He also expressed that something as simple as this might make sense. For example, if a lot is 60 feet or less on front footage, the fence height should be set at 4 feet, with the ability to adjust for grade set at 1 foot. The 1 foot adjustment would be to the bottom of the fence. Lots 60 feet or more, would be allowed a 5 foot tall fence, with the same potential 1 foot adjustment. He believes a setback distance based on fence height would be too complicated.

Chan added front yard setbacks are based on block average.

Commissioner Bohnen reiterated that lot width based height seems appropriate from his observations and pictures. He added, a 6 foot wrought iron fence is a traditional height, and that a 5 foot fence with 1 foot adjustability for grade change will likely accomplish what needs to be done. In short, the goal is to get away from 3 foot fences.

Commissioner D'Arco asked what about the distance from the sidewalk of the fence or for homes without a sidewalk.

Commissioner Bohnen replied the lot line would be used instead. He also added driveway gates should be considered to be a foot taller than the fence, to allow for curvature or other design features.

Commissioner Mowery asked for clarification that the 1 foot adjustability reflected the bottom of the fence.

Commissioner Bohnen responded correct. Ideally, the top of the fence should stay on the same plane.

Commissioner Mowery agreed.

Additional conversation in regards to front yard fence height variations ensued.

Hinsdale Heritage Award

Commissioner Bohnen introduced this item, and reviewed that the Board of Trustees may have an interest in offering small grants to historic homes. These grants would go towards projects to help maintain the homes. The maximum grant amount would be \$1,000.

Chan mentioned that Trustee Saigh brought this up at a Board meeting, and it's something that the HPC would set program parameters for.

Commissioner D'Arco asked where the funding for the program would come from.

Commissioner Bohnen replied the Village would provide the funding.

Commissioner Bohnen reviewed the background information in regards to the new restaurant moving into the downtown train station. While the HPC was not involved, the train station is very iconic and historic, and as such, is treated as a historic building. To that end, Commissioner Bohnen would like to add the discussion item to consider potentially landmarking the train station.

Commissioner D'Arco asked if other municipalities have done that.

Commissioner Bohnen replied no, but he's sure we can find out.

Additional conversation in regards to the approved awnings and train station ensued.

Adjournment

With no additional discussion, Commissioner Bohnen asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Mowery made the motion and Commissioner D'Arco seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 6:02 p.m. on January 12, 2016.

Respectfully Submitted,



Chan Yu, Village Planner