

Citizens for Glen Ellyn Preservation 2009 – 2010 Accomplishments

Festival of the Arts – CGEP’s support of both historic and fine contemporary architecture is a logical extension of the focus on the arts at this Glen Ellyn event. As the festival is now operated as a fund-raising effort by the Lion’s Club on behalf of the blind, CGEP joined the list of sponsors for the event. Board members and preservation volunteers spent August 29 and 30, 2009 at historic Lake Ellyn Park meeting interested residents and disseminating restoration literature.

Village Government – CGEP members, in particular, Cam & Jim Page, continued to monitor village board meetings & workshops and meetings of the Plan Commission, Historic Preservation Commission and Environmental Commission and then relay reports back to the CGEP board.

Special Events – CGEP welcomed representatives from Illinois Coalition for Responsible Outdoor Lighting, the Illinois chapter of International Dark Sky at a special meeting April 1, 2010 at the Glen Ellyn Civic Center. The impact of misdirected and unnecessary, decorative lighting on the environment, the economy and the historic character of the village was discussed. Resources for vintage-style, dark sky-friendly, exterior lighting were provided.

CGEP joined Sierra Club, Cool Cities, Friends of the Great Western Trail, the Glenbard West Eco Club and other local “green” groups in an Earth Day discussion of sustainability at the Glen Ellyn Library. CGEP promoted the sustainability of preservation and defined embodied energy in standing buildings.

National Preservation Month – Over 100 “A” signs were placed by CGEP volunteers in yards of homes that were identified as significant by the Village of Glen Ellyn Historic Resources Surveys. Each of these surveys covers one section of the village, noting homes and commercial buildings that would qualify as potential local landmarks. With the most recent survey to be released in 2010 and another to follow next year, the board voted in June to purchase a minimum of 60 new “A” signs.

Advocacy – In February 2010, the CGEP Board joined the League of Women Voters, the Chamber of Commerce and other local organizations in urging the village of Glen Ellyn to become a Cool City by signing the U.S. Mayor’s Climate Protection Agreement. Under this agreement, each participating community creates its own unique Climate Action Plan for the purpose of establishing a timeline for reduction of pollution. The board felt that both the preservation of standing buildings and the protection and planting of trees have a significant positive impact on sustainability.

After 5 years of delay, on February 8, the village board unexpectedly brought the Tree Preservation Ordinance to the table for discussion. In a straw poll, the majority of the board stood against amendments to the ordinance that would offer some protection to significant trees in the setbacks on private property. A large number of CGEP members attended this village meeting, as well as the Environmental Commission meeting when the ordinance was sent back to that body for review. To help gather data to test the

effectiveness of the current TPO, CGEP members have begun work with the village forester in a tree survey of post-construction properties.

Downtown Strategic Plan –CGEP board member, Tim Loftus, continued to be an active member of the Downtown Advisory Committee and reported on progress at all monthly CGEP meetings. In early October, the CGEP board wrote in objection to an unexpected action by the majority of the village board to remove a planned east-west landscaped strip that would have replaced an unsightly and unsafe commuter parking lot after the construction of a parking garage. While the majority of trustees voted against the greenscape, at the recommendation of village staff, the language referring to this concept was left in the document since it was tied into many aspects of the plan. On October 26, CGEP sent a letter to the village board with concerns that the plan for multi-family housing to surround the downtown was being guided by the zoning allowance of 5 stories, which, it was felt, was inappropriate for what is a transitional area between the two to three story downtown structures and single-family residential neighborhoods.

The Downtown Strategic Plan was finalized and adopted by the village board. While the final plan did include the creation of a downtown historic district, a last minute change of language says that this, and most other proposed actions, “will be considered.” Tim Loftus continued on the Downtown Committee as they worked to define what downtown groups would continue to operate as the plan is put into effect.

CGEP has urged the Glen Ellyn Historic Preservation Commission to promote that the village pursue creating a historic district as soon as possible.

Historic Homes Tour – Chair Liz Dawson started work with subcommittees in early February. The House Selection Committee toured entries and is finalizing homes that will be featured. Other committees, such as Operations, Publications, PR, Ticketing and Research have been formed and have begun work. The historic Lake Ellyn Boat House will be the starting point and has been reserved for the October 16 event.

Internet – The website was updated monthly with local issues, election information and a monthly preservation-related article in national or regional news. New articles were added periodically to the Restore/Rehab, Environmental and Issues headings. Along with meeting minutes and past accomplishments, past articles will continue to be accessible in the archives. Emails to the CGEP list of approximately 450 members and friends have continued to go out through Vertical Response, an online marketing site. This service is free to not-for-profit organizations. Links to the CGEP website in these emails have successfully directed an increase of visitors to the site.

Membership –An online membership resource was created by CGEP member Ian Dawson to be used to reorganize and streamline the membership renewal process. Membership Chair Chris Wilson continues to update the membership data in this program. A new, end-of-year fund-raising drive brought in generous contributions from our membership that have helped fund important advocacy and education efforts.

The 2008 – 2009 annual members’ meeting took place at the home of CGEP Board member George Allen.