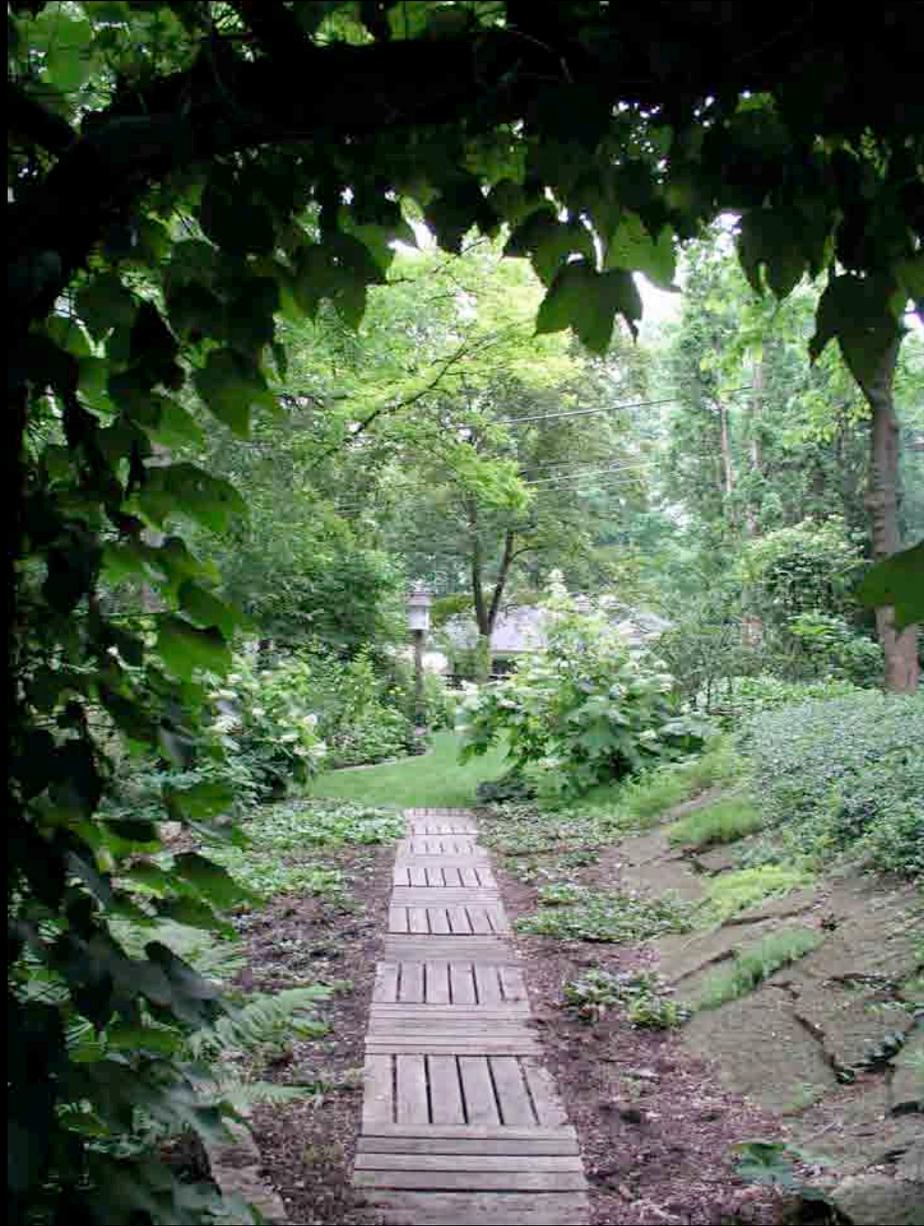




# TREE PRESERVATION IN GLEN ELLYN







A village in the woods.





Much of the village  
of Glen Ellyn was  
built within a  
thousand acre  
forest known as  
“The Grove.”





The grand old Glen Ellyn Hotel once sat on the forested top of Honeysuckle Hill, close to the current site of Glenbard West High School



The wooded landscape is an intrinsic part of the character of the village



From the earliest settlement at Stacy's Corners and through the 1970s, homes were carefully tucked into the grove of oaks, walnut and hickory.



## Pre-settlement native oaks at Lake Ellyn Park



There has long been a tradition of respect and appreciation for the natural landscape surrounding the community.

*“Whoever may have been familiar with the peculiar formation of the landscape in the vicinity of Prospect Park (now Glen Ellyn) is ready to admit that this is one of the most picturesque and charming localities in the whole west...In the midst of a thousand acres of grand old forest, broken in elevations and depressions, it is a valley of about sixty acres in extent...”*

the Wheaton Illinoisian  
May 3, 1889

Times have changed.



The 1990s brought the teardown trend to Glen Ellyn. Over 675 homes have been destroyed to date. Without an ordinance to protect the trees of the village, they were demolished along with the vintage homes to make way for new construction.



Campbell's Woods on Highview Avenue was clear-cut by a builder in spite of pleas from neighbors.



Even if trees remain, they often suffer punishment that few could survive.



The new homeowners who paid for a wooded lot end up with the tree removal bill.



While parkway trees are protected by ordinance, they too take abuse.

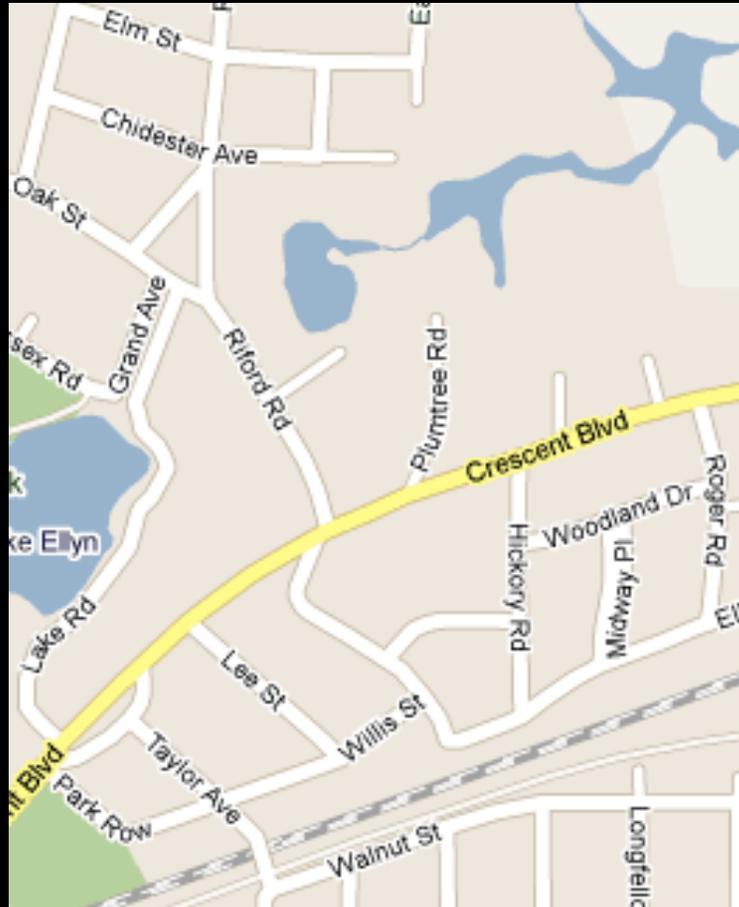


***Many thousands of valuable trees have been lost over the last decade due to new construction.***

**SLOW AND LITTLE PROGRESS:**

- **In 2006** the Village **Environmental Commission** began a year-long study into the effectiveness of the current Tree Preservation Ordinance (TPO) which does not include protection of trees on private property.
- **In February 2007** the Commission presented its conclusion to the Village Board that the current TPO was not effective in preserving the community forest.
- The Commission recommended that the TPO be amended to add tree protection in the setback (the unbuildable portion of a lot) for particularly valuable varieties of larger healthy trees that are not too close to buildings, other trees, etc.
- During the same year, the **village staff** conducted a sample study to see if the proposed amendments would be effective. In the 13 building projects in the study, *over 100 desirable, healthy trees growing in the setback would have been saved by the proposed amendments.* This did not include trees that later died.

Over one weekend in **October 2007**, volunteers from **Citizens for Glen Ellyn Preservation** conducted a survey of a Glen Ellyn neighborhood to determine public support for protection of trees in setbacks of private property. 107 households took part.



#### Results of the Survey:

- 79% signed a petition in support of mandatory tree protection on private property
- 13% were undecided
- 8% were opposed

- **In early 2008**, a year after the **Environmental Commission** had presented their recommendation to the village board, members of the board of **Citizens for Glen Ellyn Preservation** presented the results of their neighborhood survey and requested that the commission ask the village board to take action.
- The Environmental Commission returned to the village board to request action on their recommendation.
- The Village Board decided to refrain from voting but would place a question about trees in a public opinion survey planned for 2009 to see if there is public support for tree protection.
- **In June 2008**, the Village of Glen Ellyn and the Glen Ellyn Park District agreed to abandon a joint project to cut down over 340 native trees at **Ackerman Park** after a tremendous outpouring of opposition from residents who wanted the woodland preserved.
- **In 2009** the Village Board voted to cut the public opinion survey from the budget.

- Due to predicted economic constraints, the board discussed the possibility that the part-time **Village Forester** would be one of several cuts in the next budget unless income could be raised through a retail tax increase.
- A 1% retail tax increase was proposed in **March 2009**.
- The **March 17, 2009** village newsletter revealed that Emerald Ash borer had infested trees in a Glen Ellyn neighborhood.
- A 1% retail tax increase was passed by the village board in spite of some opposition.

- At a village board workshop in **2010**, **village staff** presented a review of the **2007** amendment proposals from the **Environmental Commission** and recommended against their adoption. The board took a straw poll to show that the majority on the board was opposed to tree protection on private property. It was returned to the commission for further study. The commission formed a subcommittee to take on this task.
- The subcommittee asked the Village Forester for data on post-construction tree loss. Plans were made to collect information from completed projects by a group of volunteers under the direction of the Forester over the **summer of 2010**.

## The tree survey volunteers supplied the following data from 45 properties:

- **937 trees at start of construction**
- **Of trees designated as protected, 348 remained and 163 were gone.**
- **Of trees designated as unprotected, 123 remained and 55 were gone.**
- **224 were cut down for construction**
- **24 were unknown**



The community is losing approximately 50% of trees on construction sites.

374 trees (40%) in the study were lost that might have been saved with mandatory protection of trees over 8" DBH within the setback area



- New recommendations by the subcommittee were completed in **early 2011**. Guided by **village staff**, the **Environmental Commission** put forward recommendations that included very minimal changes in the current ordinance. They also insisted that slightly stronger changes that they felt better addressed tree preservation issues be included as a second “above and beyond” version.
- The recommendations *do not include tree protection on private property*. However, they do include notification of owners of adjoining property and a Heritage Tree program so that homeowners may designate their own individual trees as significant.
- The village board plans to review the new, reduced recommendations at a village workshop on Monday, April 25. Public input about and support for the work of the commission will be imperative.
- **What you can do:**
  - Attend the workshop on Monday, April 25, 7:00 p.m. at the Civic Center
  - Email President Mark Pfefferman: [mpfeffermanvb@glenellyninfo.org](mailto:mpfeffermanvb@glenellyninfo.org)

Citizens for Glen Ellyn Preservation

[www.glenellynpreservation](http://www.glenellynpreservation)

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