



**CITY OF PARK RIDGE**

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY  
PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

**Wednesday, October 5, 2011  
City Hall, Council Chambers  
505 Butler Place  
Park Ridge, Illinois**

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PUBLICATION**

**MINUTES**

Chairwoman Barclay called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

**A. ROLL CALL**

Present

Paul Adlaf  
Judy Barclay, Chairwoman  
Barbara Christopher  
Audra Ebling  
Ann Eriksson- arrived 6:04  
John Mackin – arrived 6:09  
Shel Newman  
Janine Schmeltz  
Juliet Tiu

Staff

Jon Branham  
Laura Kleiner

Others Present

Approximately 4 citizens

Absent

None

**B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Regular Meeting Minutes of September 7, 2011**

It was moved by Commissioner Ebling, and seconded by Commissioner Tiu, that the minutes of the meeting held on September 7, 2011, be approved, as submitted.

Commissioner Newman noted that the correct address of the home on Wesley Avenue mentioned in the third paragraph under “New Business” on page three of the draft minutes should be 738 and not 729.

The Commissioners, by voice vote, unanimously approved the minutes, subject to changing the third paragraph under “New Business” to read, “The Commissioners discussed additional properties that may be significant and should possibly be added to the list, including 738 Wesley Avenue, 1103 South Crescent Avenue, other properties along Talcott Place, and 417 North Northwest Highway.”

### C. CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There were no citizens wishing to be heard on non-agenda items.

Commissioners Eriksson and Mackin arrived, after the minutes were approved.

### D. DESIGNATION REVIEW CASES

Chairman Barclay requested that the order of the designation cases to be heard, be reversed. The Commissioners agreed to reverse the order of the designation cases.

Ms. Barclay explained the public hearing process and swore in all those wishing to testify.

1. Case Number LD-11-04: Landmark Designation Application for 2101 West Touhy Avenue (Town of Maine Cemetery)

Mr. Branham noted that the Town of Maine Cemetery Association, applicant, requests a review for historic landmark designation for 2101 West Touhy Avenue.

Mr. Branham summarized the staff memo dated September 29, 2011. The cemetery sits on 17.5 acres of land at the southeast corner of Touhy Avenue and Dee Road. The cemetery serves as a prominent western gateway to Park Ridge. The cemetery was officially chartered in 1858, possibly on an ancient burial ground, with some headstones dating back to the early 1800s. Local artist Alfonso Iannelli designed the present office on the grounds and he is also interred at the cemetery. The gatehouse was built of bricks from the locally known Brickton Brickyard. At least six former Mayors of Park Ridge are buried at the cemetery as well as many of the City's founding fathers and notable persons who helped develop and grow Park Ridge. Also, over ten Civil War veterans are buried at the site. The cemetery also features many unique styles of monuments and headstones. The Town of Maine Cemetery presents a distinct character that many consider a journey through the history of Park Ridge.

He stated that staff was satisfied that the applicant meets the designation standards, with respect to the site's significance with respect to historical heritage of the community, the site's association with important persons and events in local history, and the site's identity as an established and familiar visual feature of the community.

Mr. Terrance Schaefer, representing the Board of Directors of the Town of Maine Cemetery, stated that he was proud of the improvements made at the cemetery and that the property was well maintained. Local artist Alfonso Iannelli designed the present office on the grounds and he is also interred at the cemetery. The gatehouse was built of bricks from the locally known Brickton Brickyard. The site's identity is an established and familiar visual feature of the community.

Commissioner Adlaff stated that Mr. Schaefer was very involved with the historic cemetery tours every October and really cares about the facility.

Pat Livingsparger, 413 Courtland Avenue, thanked Mr. Schaefer and the Historic Preservation Commission for its work towards designating the Town of Maine Cemetery as a local landmark.

On a motion by Commissioner Tiu, seconded by Commissioner Adlaf, the Commission

AGREED to recommend City Council approval of the Landmark Designation Application for 2101 West Touhy Avenue, (Town of Maine Cemetery), Case Number LD-11-04, as submitted.

Vote on the motion was as follows:

AYES:   9   Commissioners Adlaf, Barclay, Christopher, Ebling, Eriksson, Mackin, Newman, Schmeltz, and Tiu

NAYES:   0   None

ABSENT:   0   None

The motion passed.

2. Case Number LD-11-03: Landmark Designation Application for 808 Park Plaine Avenue (Helen Unseth House)

Mr. Branham stated Shel Newman, applicant, requests a review for historic landmark designation for 808 Park Plaine Avenue.

Commissioner Newman recused himself from voting, because he is the current owner of this house.

Mr. Branham summarized the staff memo dated September 29, 2011. The architect was Bruce Goff, noted as one of the 20<sup>th</sup> century's visionary architects. Goff designed several buildings in the Chicago area between 1934 and 1942. Goff was rooted in the Frank Lloyd Wright and Louis Sullivan schools of architectural theory, but developed his own distinctive style later in his career. The home, known as the Helen Unseth House, was one of Goff's first independent commissions. Helen Unseth was a colleague of Goff's and a local art teacher at Taft High School in Edison Park. Goff was also tied to local sculptor and artist Alfonso Iannelli, whom Goff worked with in the 1930s. The single family home was constructed in 1940. The one-story frame home includes a triangular floor plan and a flat roof. The home offers a resolution between privacy and openness on the suburban lot. A unique characteristic of Goff's is the concealed front entry at the residence. Goff's touch was also reflected in his closing the house off from street view and adjacent properties, but opening them up to the side and rear yards. The triangular plan of the house achieved this idea without sacrificing personal privacy. The peak of the triangular plan faced the front street view, with the house expanding towards the rear of the property. Angled windows were placed high in the walls to minimize views of the interior from the street and adjacent properties, yet allowed the interior of the house to be open to ample sunlight and ventilation. Rhythmic use of angled forms was utilized throughout the house, which can be noted especially in the exterior diagonal wooden boarding patterns. Another key feature of the house is a majestic fireplace located at the rear of the structure framed by a beautifully arranged sky light. After his time in Chicago, Goff designed many more significant homes throughout the country and spent time as the chairman of the architecture department at the

University of Oklahoma. The Helen Unseth House at 808 Park Plaine Avenue is a unique architectural gem and adds to the rich and diverse artistic history of Park Ridge.

Mr. Branham stated that staff was satisfied that the applicant meets the designation standards with respect to an architectural style, a notable architect, and artistic heritage of Park Ridge.

Ms. Anne Lundy, 6708 N Aldine, Chicago, representing the applicant, stated that Helen Unseth, an art teacher at Taft High School, commissioned Bruce Goff to build this house in 1940. His designs were geometric and included triangular floor plans and a flat roof. Mr. Goff was imaginative and ahead of his time and this house is a unique architectural gem that adds to the rich and diverse artistic history of Park Ridge.

Commissioner Newman added that Goff came to this area during the Great Depression and also worked as an art teacher.

On a motion by Commissioner Christopher, seconded by Commissioner Tiu, the Commission

AGREED to recommend City Council approval of the Landmark Designation Application for 808 Park Plaine Avenue (Helen Unseth House), Case Number LD-11-03, as submitted.

Vote on the motion was as follows:

AYES:   8   Commissioners Adlaf, Barclay, Christopher, Ebling, Eriksson, Mackin, Schmeltz, and Tiu

NAYES:   0   None

ABSENT:   0   None

ABSTAIN:   1   Commissioner Newman

The motion passed.

Commissioner Newman thanked Ms. Lundy for making the presentation and Mr. Branham for his assistance.

**E. OTHER ITEMS**

**1. Update on discussion/changes to Historic Preservation Ordinance**

Chairwoman Barclay reported that on September 26, 2011 the Procedures and Regulations Committee passed the changes to the Historic Preservation Ordinance as recommended by the Historic Preservation Commission with a 6 to 1 vote. On October 3, 2011, the City Council passed the recommended Ordinance changes by a 4 to 3 vote. After the meeting, Alderman Bernick, resigned as liaison to the Historic Preservation Commission, leaving the position open temporarily. She stated hopefully these changes would clear the path towards Certified Local Government (CLG) status with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA).

**F. NEW BUSINESS**

Chairwoman Barclay distributed flyers advertising a program about the architect, R.H. Zook on Sunday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Clute House at 720 Garden Street.

The Commissioners discussed ways of informing the public about the benefits of being part of historic districts including the possibility of qualifying for a tax freeze and property tax incentives.

Mr. Newman stated more publicity would be a benefit to fighting fears and misconceptions about historic preservation in the community.

Chairwoman Barclay stated bringing Catherine O'Connor back from IHPA to do another presentation could be very helpful. Commissioner Ebling and Tui also discussed possibly having an event at the library.

Commissioner Christopher expressed her concern with the method used in identifying historic properties and suggested the Commissioners discuss the proposed properties prior to designation review. Chairwoman Barclay noted that a pre-application could be done at the staff level, which acts as a significant filter, and that all cases still must ultimately be approved by the City Council. Mr. Branham added that the surveys would help greatly in the long run, as properties would be identified in a more efficient manner.

The Commissioners discussed other possible landmark designees such as 1103 South Crescent Avenue and 738 Wesley Avenue.

Chairwoman Barclay stated that local Eagle Scouts have volunteered to help out at the Iannelli Studio. An Open House is planned for October 13, 2011 from 5:00 to 7:30 pm.

Commissioner Eriksson thanked Ms. Barclay to her dedication to promoting historic preservation in Park Ridge.

**G. ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Judy Barclay, Chairwoman

These minutes are not a verbatim record of the meeting but a summary of the proceedings.

BEFORE THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
Park Ridge, Illinois

In the Matter of )  
 ) Case Number LD-11-04  
2101 West Touhy Avenue )  
Town of Maine Cemetery )

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

This matter having come before the Historic Preservation Commission for a hearing at the request of the Town of Maine Cemetery Association, for landmark designation in accordance with Section 23-3-1 of the Park Ridge Municipal Code, at 2101 West Touhy Avenue; and the Commission having held a public hearing on October 5, 2011, as required by law, and discussed the matter at its October 5, 2011, meeting; and having heard evidence on the matter, based on the evidence presented, as reflected in the minutes of these proceedings, and for the reasons indicated in the minutes of this Commission in this case,

The Historic Preservation Commission finds that the following facts have been established based on the standards set forth in the Historic Preservation Ordinance:

- 1. The site’s significance with respect to the historical, cultural, artistic, social, ethnic or other heritage of the nation, state or community.

The Town of Maine Cemetery is significant in respect to the historical heritage of the community, the site’s association with important persons and events in local history, and the site’s identity as an established and familiar visual feature of the community.

- 2. The site’s significance as it may be representative of an architectural or engineering type lending itself to the study of a style, period, craftsmanship, method of construction or use of indigenous materials.

The Town of Maine Cemetery includes a gatehouse built of bricks from the locally known Bricktown Brickyard and local artist Alfonso Iannelli designed the present office on the grounds.

- 3. The site’s association with an important person or event in the national, state, or local history.

At least six former Mayors of Park Ridge are buried at the cemetery as well as many of the City’s founding fathers and notable persons who helped develop and grow Park Ridge. Over ten Civil War veterans are buried at the site.

- 4. The site’s identity as a notable work of a master builder, designer, architect or artist whose individual genius has influenced an era.

Local commercial designer Alfonso Iannelli, who was responsible for much of the Pickwick’s interior architecture and ornamentation as well as the marquee, designed the present office on the Cemetery’s grounds.

- 5. The site’s identity as an established and familiar visual feature in the community owing to its unique location or physical characteristics.

The Town of Maine Cemetery features many unique styles of monuments and headstones and is an established and familiar visual feature of the community.

6. Criteria promulgated by the U.S. Department of the Interior for the National Register of Historic Places.

The Town of Maine Cemetery meets the criteria promulgated by the U.S. Department of the Interior for the National Register of Historic Places.

7. The preference of the owner.

The Town of Maine Cemetery Association has made the application and is in favor of receiving local landmark designation.

8. The economic and functional potentials of the site.

In association with local landmark designation, the Cemetery Association works with the Historical Society in providing tours and programs concerning the history of Park Ridge.

Therefore, the Commission recommends approval of the landmark designation, as requested, on the terms and conditions set forth in the minutes of the meeting of October 5, 2011.

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Date

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Judy Barclay, Chairwoman

BEFORE THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
Park Ridge, Illinois

In the Matter of )  
 ) Case Number LD-11-03  
808 Park Plaine Avenue )  
Helen Unseth House )

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

This matter having come before the Historic Preservation Commission for a hearing at the request of Shel Newman, owner, for landmark designation in accordance with Section 23-3-1 of the Park Ridge Municipal Code, at 808 Park Plaine Avenue; and the Commission having held a public hearing on October 5, 2011, as required by law, and discussed the matter at its October 5, 2011, meeting; and having heard evidence on the matter, based on the evidence presented, as reflected in the minutes of these proceedings, and for the reasons indicated in the minutes of this Commission in this case,

The Historic Preservation Commission finds that the following facts have been established based on the standards set forth in the Historic Preservation Ordinance:

- 1. The site’s significance with respect to the historical, cultural, artistic, social, ethnic or other heritage of the nation, state or community.

The Helen Unseth House is significant in respect to its architectural style and artistic heritage by a notable architect.

- 2. The site’s significance as it may be representative of an architectural or engineering type lending itself to the study of a style, period, craftsmanship, method of construction or use of indigenous materials.

The architect, Bruce Goff, is noted as one of the 20<sup>th</sup> century’s visionary architects.

- 3. The site’s association with an important person or event in the national, state, or local history.

Goff was rooted in the Frank Lloyd Wright and Louis Sullivan schools of architectural theory and also worked with local sculptor and artist Alfonso Iannelli in the 1930s.

- 4. The site’s identity as a notable work of a master builder, designer, architect or artist whose individual genius has influenced an era.

Bruce Goff is noted as one of the 20<sup>th</sup> century’s visionary architects and spent time as the chairman of the architecture department at the University of Oklahoma.

- 5. The site’s identity as an established and familiar visual feature in the community owing to its unique location or physical characteristics.

The one story frame house built in 1940, includes a triangular plan that closed the house off from street view and adjacent properties but opening it up to the side and rear yards. A unique characteristic is a concealed front entry at the residence.

6. Criteria promulgated by the U.S. Department of the Interior for the National Register of Historic Places.

The house meets the criteria promulgated by the U.S. Department of the Interior for the National Register of Historic Places.

7. The preference of the owner.

The owner of the house, Shel Newman, has made the application and is in favor receiving local landmark designation.

8. The economic and functional potentials of the site.

The house is a unique architectural gem and adds to the rich and diverse artistic history of Park Ridge.

Therefore, the Commission recommends approval of the landmark designation, as requested, on the terms and conditions set forth in the minutes of the meeting of October 5, 2011.

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Date

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Judy Barclay, Chairwoman