

# Village of Oak Park Strategic Historic Preservation Plan

Steering Committee Meeting #1  
September 8, 2009

## Tonight's Agenda

- ▶ Introductions
- ▶ Overview: What is a Historic Preservation Plan?
- ▶ Review of Oak Park's process
- ▶ Preliminary Results: How are other communities looking at historic preservation? What are the issues?
- ▶ Initial focus group and interview themes
- ▶ Mission Statement review/formulation
  - ▶ Overall Project Goals
  - ▶ Initial Opportunities and Constraints



## Historic Preservation Planning

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- ▶ **Broad Planning Goals**
  - ▶ Give focus to community interest in enhancing historic resources
  - ▶ Integrate preservation with local land use and economic development decisions
  - ▶ Be pro-active in approach, mitigating uncertainties about local preservation processes



## The Process

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- ▶ Well-described in Forum article
- ▶ No 'typical' format
- ▶ Similar to other planning processes
- ▶ **'Stand Alone' Historic Preservation Plan**
  - ▶ Background
  - ▶ Public Input and Involvement by all Stakeholders
  - ▶ Consensus Vision for Future
  - ▶ Vision translates to Goals and Policies
  - ▶ Future Actions



## Preservation Plan Elements

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- ▶ **Some Typical Preservation Plan Elements**
  - ▶ Statement of goals specific to the community
  - ▶ Definition of the community's historic character
  - ▶ Summary of past and current preservation efforts
  - ▶ Description of local historic resources—survey or review
  - ▶ Description of the relationship between preservation and local plans
  - ▶ Consider existing or potential incentives to enable local preservation goals
  - ▶ Possible approaches to preservation education
  - ▶ An action plan, with goals and objectives, for plan implementation



## Oak Park's Process

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- ▶ **1994 Preservation Plan Update**
- ▶ **Three Phases**
  - ▶ Assessment
  - ▶ Testing
  - ▶ Strategy Formulation
- ▶ **Completion in April, 2010**



## Oak Park's Process (cont)

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- ▶ **Phase I: Assessment of Historic Preservation Planning Activities (in process)**
  - ▶ Reconnaissance/Research
  - ▶ Focus Groups
  - ▶ Stakeholder Interviews
  - ▶ Tonight's Meeting
  - ▶ Community Workshop (October 21)



## Oak Park's Process (cont)

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- ▶ 'State of Oak Park Preservation'
- ▶ Joint Steering Committee Meeting: Review, Test Assumptions, and Start Visioning Conversation
- ▶ **Phase 2: Community Visioning**
  - ▶ Strategy Preparation
  - ▶ Community Workshop: Test Strategies and Assumptions



## Oak Park's Process (cont)

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- ▶ **Phase 3: Final Plan**
  - ▶ Draft Plan Document
  - ▶ Draft Plan Review
  - ▶ Community Workshop: Vision Confirmation and Strategy Refinement
  - ▶ Final Plan Document
  - ▶ Final Presentation



## The 'Big Picture'

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- ▶ Oak Park's tradition of great design and high quality
- ▶ 40 year history of effective preservation actions
- ▶ **Considering Don Rypkema's 'Big 3' Issues**
  - ▶ Property Rights: What's real, what's contrived, and what's the impact of that right on the community
  - ▶ Property Values: Improving both aesthetics, or context, and real estate values
  - ▶ Sustainability: Conserving and increasing efficiency



## Other Locales: The 'Big Picture'

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### ▶ Incentives

- ▶ Local Sales Tax Rebates
- ▶ Permits/Zoning Relief
- ▶ Special Adaptive Use Processes/Provisions
- ▶ Façade Improvements/Grants
- ▶ Residential Tax Freeze
- ▶ Easements
- ▶ Improving existing tax credits (elsewhere)

### ▶ Preservation Processes

- ▶ Staff Approvals
- ▶ Advisory Review Processes (commercial)



## Other Locales: The 'Big Picture'

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### ▶ Education

- ▶ Storefront/ground floor improvements
- ▶ Stakeholder Engagement
- ▶ Commercial broker/realtor training
- ▶ Homeowner Programs



## Initial Focus Group Thoughts

- ▶ “Say why preservation is important...”
- ▶ Looking at development over time
- ▶ Education is key for Oak Park
- ▶ Identify priorities to help preservation organizations and Boards and Commissions
- ▶ Consider cultural heritage, in addition to landmarks
- ▶ Innovation is acceptable, but how to fit with context



## Property Owner Stakeholders

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Residential Owners</b></li> <li>▶ Home, not Investment</li> <li>▶ Self-selected for historic properties</li> <li>▶ Commitment to neighborhood/community</li> <li>▶ Quality/Cost/Benefit: Getting what you pay for...</li> <li>▶ Source of personal pride</li> <li>▶ Voters</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Commercial Owners</b></li> <li>▶ Business and livelihood</li> <li>▶ May answer to multiple investors</li> <li>▶ Minimize expense/Optimize value</li> <li>▶ Tenant quality</li> <li>▶ Commitment to market</li> <li>▶ May or may not be resident</li> <li>▶ The ‘carrot’ needs to be real</li> </ul> |
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## Property Owner Perspectives

### ▶ Village

- ▶ Prosperity and stability
- ▶ Preserve resources for the long-term
- ▶ Enable measures to sustain local revenues
- ▶ Maintain community image
- ▶ Achieve consensus and implement

### ▶ Institutional Owners

- ▶ Mission driven
- ▶ Link to community
- ▶ Support for ongoing operations
- ▶ Land acquisition to support future expansion aka 'naming opportunities'
- ▶ Financial situation
- ▶ May be major employer/ taxpayer



Questions?

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## Mission Statement

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- ▶ Previous Plan Mission Statement Review
- ▶ Discussion
- ▶ Develop new, updated Mission Statement



## Preliminary SWOT

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- ▶ Identify opportunities and constraints
- ▶ Assume your 'stakeholder' hat
- ▶ Will re-test in next meeting
- ▶ Group Discussion
- ▶ Sample SWOT points follow



## Strengths

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- ▶ Village historic preservation story



## Weaknesses

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- ▶ Real estate value pressures



## Opportunities

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- ▶ Potential to increase engagement with commercial and institutional property owners



## Threats

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- ▶ Legal challenge to preservation criteria and processes (Chicago's Hanna lawsuit)

