

# Lake Forest Preservation Foundation NEWSLETTER

Lake Forest, Illinois

Volume 4, Number 1

Winter/Spring 2011

## DOWNTOWN TRAIN STATION RESTORATION NEWS

by Gail T. Hodges

Restoration of the historic downtown Train Station will begin in a few months! In early November, the City of Lake Forest was awarded an \$835,090 Federal grant for the restoration of the Station through the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP). The grant, plus \$400,000 of commitments from the City of Lake Forest and METRA, will provide \$1.2 million to fund the restoration of the original slate roof and exterior to exacting preservation standards.

**Historic and Contemporary Significance** Constructed in 1900, the Station was designed by renowned Chicago architects and Lake Forest residents Charles S. Frost and Alfred H. Granger, architects for the Chicago & North Western Railway. The Tudor-Revival building is listed as a contributing structure in the Lake Forest National Register Historic District. Today,

**Foundation's Contribution to Save the Station** In 2008, the Preservation Foundation recognized that the Station was in desperate need of repair and would eventually become vulnerable to demolition or modern replacement. To preclude this possibility, the Foundation Board commissioned a \$50,000 "Historic Structure Report" by noted preservation architect, Gunny Harboe. *This initiative by the Preservation Foundation, funded by the investment of members' dues, laid the groundwork for a two-year collaboration between the Foundation (which helped write the grant), the City, and State Senator Susan Garrett to secure ITEP funding to preserve this important historic site.*

**The Need for Restoration** The Station first was renovated circa 1980 in a campaign undertaken by the Foundation in co-



Photo by Harboe Architects



Photo by Harboe Architects

the Station serves as an active METRA station for nearly 1,000 commuters daily, an important trailhead facility and comfort station for the adjacent Robert McClory regional bike trail, a focal point of the downtown business district, and a site for community activities centered at historic Market Square.

operation with the City, the North Western, RTA (METRA), and local businesses and residents. That work is failing after nearly 30 years and is beyond its "useful life." The Station's foundation has suffered significant water damage due to deteriorated roof structure and shingles, gutters, windows, and brick

(continued inside)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In the still of the night, if you live near town, you can hear the 4:30 a.m. train rumble into Lake Forest even if it's winter and all of your windows are shut tight. Being awakened, I think of those men and women 150 years ago who toiled diligently, taking these same train tracks downtown to build their fortunes and the foundation of today's Lake Forest.

Fast forward to today...the "150" banner is hanging over Market Square, a clear reminder of our heritage, aglow in green in the dark. I wonder if those fine people of a century-and-a-half ago ever envisioned how beautiful and wonderful our town would be today.

It has not been without controversy to keep it as intended. The Preservation Foundation has fought hard in many instances to prevent ruin of our landmarks, some successful, such as the Walden/Bluff's Edge Bridge, and some not, such as the David Adler designed Chicken Coop at Elawa Farm, torn down not long ago. I think the founders from the 1860s had an idea of what the town should look like in the future, and for the most part it has been realized. However, it's taken a lot of hard work by many preservation-minded people such as you and members of the Preservation Foundation.

This year we have outstanding programs supporting Lake Forest's 150th anniversary, starting with our April 17th program. This lecture will be followed by tours of award-winning 150th Anniversary Homes, absolutely a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for you and your family. Following, we are hosting a Jens Jensen Restoration Private Garden Tour in May, our annual Family Fair in Market Square in June, and our Lake Forest Train Station event in September.

All of these are described in this issue of the Preservation Foundation Newsletter. I hope you have an opportunity to attend these events, support your Foundation and bask in the glow of what our founders envisioned so long ago.

Tom Daly

*Please Join Us on Sunday, April 17*

Lily Reid Holt Memorial Chapel at Lake Forest College

**1:45 p.m. Founders Lecture**

**2:30 p.m. Historic House Tour**

**4:30-5:30 p.m. Wine and Cheese Reception**

*Tickets for House Tour and Reception*

Members \$45 • Non-Members \$55

R.S.V.P. by April 14, 2011

Please call the Preservation Foundation Office 847.234.1230

or email [info@lfpf.org](mailto:info@lfpf.org)

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Marcy Kerr

# CELEBRATING 150 YEARS

## OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY IN LAKE FOREST

In honor of Lake Forest's 150th Anniversary, the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation will host a Founders Lecture and Historic House Tour on Sunday, April 17, 2011.

"The History of Prominent Lake Forest Architecture" will be presented by Arthur H. Miller, who is a Lake Forest Preservation Foundation past-president and Lake Forest College Archivist for Special Collections, and noted architectural historian Susan Benjamin of Benjamin Historic Certifications.

The beauty of Lake Michigan's towering bluffs, a wealthy cosmopolitan clientele and nationally-renowned architects all converged to create the unique community of beautiful houses and country estates we know today. The speakers will explore the evolution of Lake Forest from its picturesque, wooded beginnings through the era of classic country estates. Following the lecture there will be a tour of four rarely viewed, private 19th Century Lake Forest houses.



Photo by John S. Eckert



Photo by John Litchfield

### WITOLD RYBCZNSKI, *MAKESHIFT METROPOLIS: IDEAS ABOUT CITIES*

(New York: Scribner, 2010), 240 pp. Available at Lake Forest Bookstore (\$24.00) and Lake Forest Library (720.977 RYB).

A New Book Review by Arthur H. Miller

Rybczynski is an excellent writer and storyteller, known for highly readable earlier books about landscape designer F. L. Olmsted (*A Clearing in the Distance*, 1999) and seminal architect Palladio (*The Perfect House*, 2002). Here he continues a discussion he began in his 1995 book, *City Life*, about "what we want from cities." In *Makeshift* he charts the change over the last century from planning and the City Beautiful, found in Lake Forest in Shaw's 1916 Market Square and in Edward H. Bennett's 1923 City zoning plan and 1925 Knollwood Club layout, to a market and developer-driven scenario in the early 2000s. He goes on to outline "The Kind of Cities We Need" in an era of expensive energy where "efforts will have to be made to achieve a

denser way of life, while at the same time taking into account people's desire for dispersed living in smaller cities." He calls for a return to planning and to Parisian style apartment buildings near parks and public transportation as sustainable.

For Lake Forest, celebrating its 150th anniversary as a city, Rybczynski's vision offers a challenge to look ahead and plan for this City at 200 years or 250 years. Lake Forest, labeled by the *Wall Street Journal* in 2010 as one of the ten most "walkable" U.S. cities, meets his criteria as a most desirable setting for growth in the years ahead. As we move here to greater density as we have in the last century, from 3,300 in 1910 to 19,375 in 2010, how do we manage a similar jump in numbers by 2110 without losing our historic visual character? If

we look at our zoning, do we replicate the balkanization, or lot-dividing, seen south of here along Sheridan Road in Highland Park and Glencoe? Or do we plan for greater, better organized and sustainable density in walking distance from our train stations: two on the east side of town at Deerpath and Old Elm and one on the west at Everett Road? Do we protect our open space beyond, but also between, our houses? Do we opt for the civilized "green" warmth of better northwest Paris suburbs or instead do we slide into the hodge-podge of unsustainable, inharmonious and jammed-together McMansion neighborhoods found to the south? Rybczynski would advise us to return to the planning models of Shaw's and Bennett's era to protect Lake Forest as a "special place."

# UPDATE: FOREST PARK PROJECT BOARD AND DESIGN DEVELOPMENT PLAN

by Rommy Lopat

In May, 2010, the Lake Forest City Council passed Resolution 2010-06 that determined that it will “be in the best interests of the City to accept the Lake Forest Garden Club’s general gift of a Conceptual Master Plan for Forest Park and to thereafter continue the process of developing a final plan (the ‘Design Development Plan’)...that will involve the creation of a 501(c)3 called the Forest Park Project Board with sub-committees that engage interested parties from the community to evaluate aspects of the Design Development Plan.”

A Forest Park Project Board Executive Committee was formed in Summer, 2010 and some of its Sub-Committees began to meet in Fall, 2010. The purpose of the Executive Committee is “to supervise and manage the entire project and review all recommendations and data provided by the focus committees and the Landscape Architect.”\*

The Executive Committee is composed of Ralph Gesualdo (chair), Jane O’Neil, Joan DePree (vice chairs); Pamela Bailey (secretary); Paul Bergmann, Mark Goodman (legal); Sandy Stuart (treasurer), plus the chairpersons of the Sub-Committees.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS OF THE FOREST PARK PROJECT BOARD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**February** The Engineering Sub-Committee will present its preliminary find-

ings on whether the Ring Road should be retained and if so, what characteristics it should have (curbs or no curbs, drainage, width, surface materials). The Committee has done a preliminary analysis of the bluff’s stability. The Committee is reviewing the condition of the existing concrete stairs as well as the wood ramps and stairs to the beach.



1911 hand-colored, glass lantern slide view of southeast portion, Middle Campus of Lake Forest College, labeled “Our Botanical Garden.” This reflects a 1892 campus plan by O.C. Simonds and an 1897 campus plan by Warren Manning, Boston, both landscape architects who founded the American Society of Landscape Architects, 1899. Archives, Lake Forest College library.

**March** The Historic Preservation Advisory Sub-Committee will present its draft report on significant historic aspects and elements of the park such as views,

the ring road, and landscape motifs as defined by original (1896) landscape gardener, O.C. Simonds. It is also reviewing how proposed park infrastructure and landscape can be made consistent with the Lake Forest’s City Code and its Certificate of [Historic] Appropriateness and standards for National Historic District Sites. (Note: The Committee is seeking

photographs of the park spanning from 1900-2000.)

**April** The Landscape and Horticulture Sub-Committee will present its preliminary

review of the landscape plan as presented by the LF Garden Club and the committees’ recommended guidelines on plant selection and massing, horticultural diversity, bluff restoration, vistas, and landscape education opportunities.

**Public Meeting** Executive Committee chair Ralph Gesualdo is hopeful that a public meeting can be held in April. According to Gesualdo, one Project Board representative will likely present the Executive Committee’s findings and recommendations “so that as much time as possible can be given to taking public questions and comments.”

In addition, the Public Communications and Marketing Sub-Committee has interviewed three local public relations/marketing firms and has selected one which will provide public communications, a website, and perhaps fundraising assistance.



The Lake Forest Preservation Foundation published a position paper in November 2010 regarding the Forest Park Concept Plan. The position paper has been sent to the Forest Park Project Board and to the City Council and City Manager. To read its full text, please go to [lfpf.org](http://lfpf.org).

*\*Source: City of Lake Forest website 2/15/2011: “What’s New?” Forest Park Master Plan Project Board Information. Revised 7/2/10.*

mortar. Inadequate public restrooms do not meet ADA guidelines. Interior woodwork and plaster are water damaged. Floor tiles are crumbling, and floor safety is compromised by standing water from roofleaks. Fire and life-safety hardware is required. Mechanical systems need to be replaced with up-to-date systems that operate cost effectively.

**Exterior Restoration** The first phase of the project will involve exterior restoration, to include the following components: (1) replace deteriorating cedar shake shingles with original slate shingles, (2) repair deteriorated exterior structural elements and trim, (3) replace existing deteriorated gutters with authentic copper gutters, (4) repair damaged windows and doors, (5) stabilize water-damaged foundation, masonry, and ticket agent bay window, and (5) restore stucco.

**Future Interior Restoration** When additional funds are raised, interior restoration will begin. This will include (1) replace crumbling floor tiles and baseboards with original materials, (2) expand public restroom facilities and make them ADA compliant, (3) restore water-damaged interior woodwork and plaster, (4) install fire and other life-safety hardware, (5) replace mechanical systems, and (6) refurbish and construct additional display cases for expanded museum exhibits.

**Importance of Preservation Architectural Supervision to Ensuring Longevity of the Restoration** Budget constraints limited employing a comprehensive preservation approach in the 1980's renovation. The goal now is to restore the Station to standards comparable to the original construction that ensured a life of over 80 years. The Harboe "Historic Structure Report" and funds for the exterior are a start.



Photo by Harboe Architects

To secure this historic station for decades to come will require both a preservation architect for design and a construction firm experienced in meeting preservation standards. *It is the Preservation Foundation's intent to ensure that the project meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, including required Section 106 Review and a Certificate of Appropriateness from the City's Historic Preservation Commission.*

**Capital Campaign Planned to Complete the Restoration** While \$1.2 million has been raised, additional funds are needed to complete the restoration and rehabilitation of our historic Station. The Preservation Foundation is organizing a Capital Campaign to secure approximately \$2 million of funds to undertake the remaining construction.

**Your Help Is Needed** The immediate need is to raise \$10,000-\$15,000 to hire professional fund counsel to undertake a market feasibility study to conduct community interviews and recommend an appropriate Campaign structure, including requirements for achievable goals. With your help, the preservation of our iconic Lake Forest Downtown Station will be ensured for future generations. Please contact the Foundation at 847-234-1230 or [office@lfpf.org](mailto:office@lfpf.org) to contribute or help with the Campaign. Donations are tax deductible. Naming opportunities will be available.

For further information on the background of the Lake Forest Downtown Station, please see "The Lake Forest Preservation Newsletter," Volume 1, Number 2, Awards 2008, at [www.lfpf.org/news](http://www.lfpf.org/news).

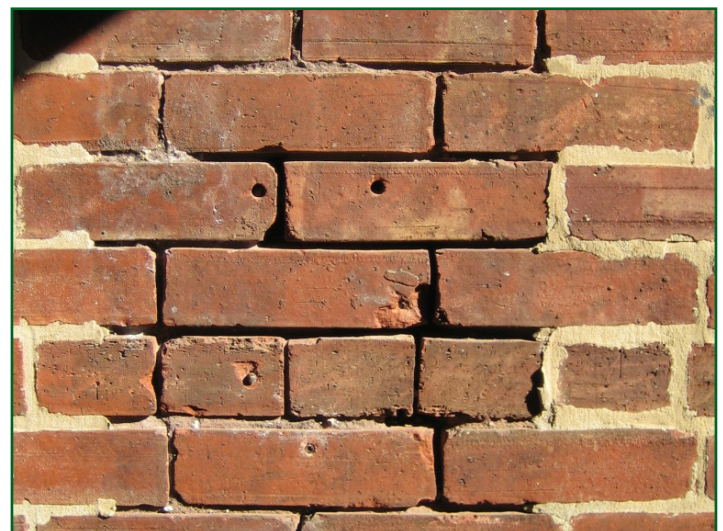


Photo by Harboe Architects

FOR THOSE IN THE KNOW, HERE YOU GO!





## The Lake Forest Preservation Foundation

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### LAKE FOREST PRESERVATION FOUNDATION *UPCOMING EVENTS*

#### **Celebrating 150 years of Architectural History in Lake Forest**

Sunday, April 17

Susan Benjamin & Art Miller present a program covering Lake Forest's residential architecture from 1860.

A Tour of the 150th Anniversary Award winning homes will follow the lecture.

#### **Jens Jensen Garden Restoration**

Sunday, May 22

A Private Tour for Lake Forest Preservation Foundation members of a beautiful garden and ravine restoration

#### **3rd Annual Family Fair in Market Square**

Saturday, June 25

Fun for the whole family and tours of the City

#### **Here We Go Again: Tooting the Train Horn for Preservation**

Thursday, September 22

A hardhat party celebrating the 35th anniversary of the LFPF and its first preservation undertaking, the Lake Forest Train Station Renovation

### **We are planning more exciting programs for 2011**

Historic Interiors • The Face of a House: Doors and Shutters

**Check the website for the upcoming dates**

• Visit us on the web @ [www.lfpf.org](http://www.lfpf.org)