

## Summer 2012 Newsletter

### Protect Your Heritage

PDHA next  
Meeting  
Wednesday  
August 15  
7 PM  
Lincoln Center  
Room 202

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Pierce Downer's  
Heritage Alliance  
P.O. Box 422  
Downers Grove  
Illinois 60515

## Village to Update Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan

Downers Grove has had a plan for bicycle and pedestrian routes through the village in place since 2000. In recent years cycling and walking have become increasingly popular for both recreational activities and purpose-oriented trips, such as shopping and journeys to work. A serious lack of connectivity and user friendliness in our village's current bicycle and pedestrian routes has significantly limited the use of these routes. To address these shortcomings, the Village has contracted with Sam Schwartz Engineering, PLLC to update and upgrade the local Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. This effort seeks to improve sensitivity to existing and emerging needs, such as demographically driven shifts in mobility requirements. An *ad hoc* working group of residents and officials was created to participate with the consultant in framing the Plan. This group first met at Village Hall on March 20. At that time several



On Street Bike Route

examples of successful bikeway project planning and implementation in both large and small communities were presented.



A Bike Route Separated from Motorized Vehicles

When feasible, it is clearly desirable to maximize the separation of bicycle and pedestrian movements from motorized vehicle flow. An illustration of such separation is shown on the left. Local preferential routings should be placed in such a way that they link up with countywide bicycle trails and routes and avoid the confusion of incomplete links or "dead ends" into automobile and truck traffic.

The initial goals of the revised Plan are the following:

- Improve mobility for non-motorized transportation users
- Transition Downers Grove into a Bicycle Friendly Community (an official designation)
- Develop a plan for facilities compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Improve the pedestrian experience in downtown Downers Grove, and
- Improve Downers Grove's competitiveness as a desirable location for employers and corporations.

The consultant is currently engaged in field surveys and observations. The project's work products will include a corridor/intersection safety analysis, a pedestrian infrastructure improvement plan, an updated bicycle network, and new design cross-sections for certain streets. Additional components of the project include policy recommendations, education, encouragement of ideas and the development of a preliminary parking plan for bicycles. Public input was collected at four separate venues during the month of June. The consultant's initial findings based on fieldwork and resident input obtained at these sessions will be presented to the working group later this summer. – *Chris Saricks*

**Protect  
Your  
Heritage**

**PDHA Directors**

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance is a 17-year old, Illinois not-for-profit corporation recognized as a charitable group by the Internal Revenue Service.

The Heritage Alliance's Board of Directors manages its activities.

The following people are current PDHA directors:  
 Chair Ken Lerner,  
 Chair Pro-Tem Chris Saricks,  
 Secretary Tim Meaney,  
 Treasurer Gordon Goodman,  
 Jane Amorosi,  
 Wally Brown,  
 Jim Cavallo,  
 Greg Hosé,  
 John Schofield,  
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**Proposed Bicycle Trail Adjacent to Lyman Woods**

Morgan Cotten, Chief Highway Engineer for DuPage County, was on hand at the June PDHA meeting to describe a bikeway/pedestrian trail proposed for the south side of 31<sup>st</sup> Street between Fairview and Highland Avenues. The proposed trail would connect the existing trail system east of Fairview Avenue with the Salt Creek trail system to the west of Highland. It would run along the northern edge of Lyman Woods and while it would help with pedestrian and bike access, construction would involve some impact to the Woods. A total of seven Lyman Woods trees would have to be removed, and a small area of wetland (estimated 50 square feet) would be affected. The tentative plans calls for replacement of the trees and compensation for the wetland loss.



Mr. Cotten described changes to the trail design that have been made to lessen the impact on the Woods, and went over options for parts of the trail that present engineering and aesthetic challenges. The group discussed different options for bridging the stream that enters the Woods from the north after going under 31<sup>st</sup> Street. The County is still studying various aspects of the design, and of course cost is a factor.

Construction is slated for the summer of 2014 and will be preceded by two preliminary phases – an environmental impact study phase followed by a design phase. The environmental study will include design alternatives and construction material options. The environmental study will be part of a draft report due out on October 12<sup>th</sup>, with the final design phase occurring in 2013 (date unspecified). Mr. Cotten said that he welcomes comments from PDHA and will send a copy of the draft report for review once it is ready. – *By Tim Meaney & Ken Lerner*

**PDHA and Park District Thank Dan Cermak for Service,  
 Welcome Bill McAdam**

Retiring Executive Director Dan Cermak received many testimonials at the May 17<sup>th</sup> Park District Board meeting, including a resolution honoring his service and a plaque from the Board, as well as comments from Board President Bob Gelwicks and PDHA, among others. Mr. Cermak retired May 31<sup>st</sup> with 34 years of service.



Dan Cermak

A letter from Gordon Goodman thanked Mr. Cermak for his leadership on preservation projects, including the acquisition of additional natural areas to expand Lyman Woods, and major efforts in the negotiation of a new home for the 1846 Blodgett House that now



Bill McAdam

stands on the Park District's Historical Museum grounds. PDHA Chairman Ken Lerner remarked on the group's continuing good relationship with the Park District and thanked Mr. Cermak and the Board for the opportunity to partner with the District on educational programs such as Little Sprouts and the Arbor Day tree distributions.

As we bid Mr. Cermak farewell, we welcome new Executive Director Bill McAdam, who took over as Executive Director in June. Mr. McAdam brings over 20 years of experience to the position, most recently overseeing the Oswegoland Park District. He is accredited as a Certified Park & Recreation Executive by the National Recreation and Park Association. He has expressed his desire to continue the Park District's relationship with PDHA, and showed his interest by attending our June meeting. We look forward to future meetings with Mr. McAdam and to working with him on new projects to preserve and enhance our natural and cultural heritage. – *By Ken Lerner*

## Volunteer Opportunities at Our Natural Areas

Volunteer opportunities to help maintain, develop, and show off our natural areas, Lyman Woods and Belmont Prairie, include the following:

### R.E.A.P. Volunteer Workdays:

Land management workdays are held on selected Saturdays from 8 – 10:30 am.

#### Summer Workdays

Lyman Woods July 14 & August 11

Belmont Prairie September 15

**Volunteers must register at least one week in advance of the scheduled workday.**



Lyman Woods Volunteers at Work

**Summer Camp Volunteers:** Looking for volunteer experience? Want to spend your summer outside? Lyman Woods Summer Camp Assistants help the camp counselor and campers with games, crafts, hikes and outdoor activities. Volunteers must be at least 14 years old, available to work at least one full week of camp, and willing to attend an orientation and training.

**Green Thumbs Needed!** Do you have a green thumb, or are you looking to learn more about native plants and gardening? We need a volunteer crew to help maintain the native plant demonstration and butterfly gardens at Lyman Woods. Volunteers must be available to volunteer on a regular basis and love getting their hands dirty!

**Hiking Patrol:** Love to hike? Want to spend more time outdoors? Hiking Patrol volunteers help us maintain our beautiful natural areas by hiking the trails at Lyman Woods and the Belmont Prairie. Pairs of volunteers work together to inspect trails, report trail conditions, and answer frequently asked questions from fellow hikers.

If you'd like to volunteer for one of these activities, or just want more information, please contact Shannon Forsythe at 630.963.9388 or [sforsythe@dgparks.org](mailto:sforsythe@dgparks.org) for more information. – *By Shannon Forsythe*

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Stormwater Project Takes Root

Severe flooding problems near 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and Cumnor Road led the Village to purchase several homes, remove them, and build a “wet-bottom” water retention pond. Public Works incorporated several ideas from the new Comprehensive Plan and landscaped the project with native plants and flowers. There is also a rain garden/swale on the south side to slow and filter water.



2<sup>nd</sup> Street Stormwater Project

59<sup>th</sup> Street. These rain gardens act as a showcase and proof-of-design for homeowners with wet spots on their property. Builders can also use rain gardens to mitigate water running off of their property and into neighbors' yards and basements. – *By Mark Thoman*

*Please Join Us  
on Our  
Remaining 2012  
Highland Ave.  
Adopt-A-  
Highway  
CLEAN-UP DAYS*

*August 18  
October 6*

*Saturdays  
8:30-10:30 am*

*Check our  
website for  
updates and to  
sign up to  
participate!*

*Have you  
renewed your  
membership in  
the Heritage  
Alliance?*

*See the back page  
of this newsletter  
for more info and  
how YOU can  
make a  
difference!*

**Save the Date:**  
October 6, 2012 is  
tentatively  
scheduled for  
a one-day recycling  
extravaganza event  
in Downers Grove.

Check us out  
at

[www.PDHA.org](http://www.PDHA.org)

*Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance*  
P.O. Box 422  
Downers Grove, Illinois 60515



Pierce Downer  
1782-1863

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance Summer 2012 Newsletter

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**You are invited to join us at our next 2012 Meeting**  
**Wednesday, August 15, 7:00 pm**  
**Room TBA, Lincoln Center, 935 Maple Ave., Downers Grove.**  
Check our website [www.PDHA.org](http://www.PDHA.org) for more details.

**Your membership in the Alliance helps in our efforts to petition local government officials to preserve our heritage resources. Your participation in our programs demonstrates to our community the strength of our alliance to protect Downers Grove's natural and cultural heritage.**

Please join Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance or renew your membership now as we work for protection of the natural and cultural heritage of Downers Grove.

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance  
P.O. Box 422, Downers Grove, IL 60515

Yes, I want to begin/renew my membership in Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Contribution: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Employer matching contribution?) \_\_\_\_\_ I/We can also volunteer some time.**

A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION of \$10 or more will help the Alliance defray expenses, but is **not** required for membership. Your email address will allow us to keep you informed of future events.