

National Register Nomination Process Continues

At the August 5, 2008 Village Board Meeting, the Village Board approved an ordinance authorizing the submission of the Village of Kenilworth National Register District Nomination to the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency over Village President Chisum's veto. The proposed National Register Historic District would encompass the entire community with the exception of the properties owned by the Joseph Sears School.

After a review of the nomination, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA) will publish a notice on approximately October 30th in the *Wilmette Life* regarding consideration of the proposed district at the December meeting of the Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council (IHSAC). In early November, property owners will receive a courtesy letter from the Village detailing the process for expressing approval or objection to the establishment of the National Register District. Every property owner will have an opportunity to provide input to the IHSAC. Property owners wishing to oppose the establishment of the proposed district must send a notarized letter expressing their opposition to the State Historic Preservation Agency. Property owners who support the creation of the proposed district may submit written statements of support as well, but no formal action expressing support is required by the process. Property owners will have approximately 30 days to provide their input regarding the proposed district prior to the December 5, 2008 IHSAC meeting.

On November 4, 2008 a resident initiated advisory referendum question will be on the ballot. The question reads, "Should the Village of Kenilworth nominate all lands and structures within its municipal boundaries, regardless of private or public ownership, for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places?" Property owners will have an opportunity to express their opinion via both the National Register public input process to the Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council and registered voters will also be able to vote at the ballot box on the advisory referendum question.

The following are answers to frequently asked questions regarding the National Register of Historic Places and the nomination process.

What is the National Register of Historic Places and why is the Village pursuing this nomination? The National Register of Historic Places is simply a list which formally recognizes or honors historic structures, sites and areas throughout the country. It is an official listing of neighborhoods, properties, sites and buildings that exemplify the historic development of our nation, states and local communities. The National Register was chosen as a compromise between residents who requested prescriptive programs and those who preferred none. Please consult the Village's nomination form "Part 4: Significance of Kenilworth" to read why Kenilworth is historically significant. Copies of the nomination are available on the Village website or in hard copy at Village Hall.

What opportunities result from properties being part of a National Register district? National Register designation allows qualified residential and commercial property owners to take advantage of voluntary renovation and/or preservation financial incentives, technical assistance, and facade easement programs. Incentive programs have qualifications, including spending thresholds and rehabilitation guidelines. Some programs may

result in short term property tax savings (if taxing bodies do not opt out), while others allow Federal income tax deductions. Please visit the IHPA website at <http://www.illinoishistory.gov/PS/financial.htm> to learn more about financial incentives.

Will the creation of a National Register Historic District restrict or limit what I can do to my property? Listing on the National Register of Historic Places is purely honorific and involves no review or regulations of what an owner may do to his or her property unless owners voluntarily participate in one of the financial incentive programs. Owners of National Register properties enjoy the same freedom to change their properties, without review or restriction, they had before listing took place.

How does a National Register of Historic Places District differ from a local historic district? The National Register is a list of historic properties and areas maintained by the National Park Service. It is NOT a local program, and has no local review board or local regulations associated with it.

Will a National Register Historic District lead to the establishment of a restrictive local historic district? Local historic districts were not recommended to, and are not being considered by the Village Board. At their June meeting, the Village Board passed a resolution stating they would not create a local historic district for Kenilworth.

How many properties are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and are there other districts on the North Shore? Over 1.4 million properties, representing every state in the nation, have been listed on the National Register since 1966. Illinois has over 1500 listings, many of which are districts. On the North Shore alone, there are 17 National Register historic districts, including the nearby "CAGE" area of Wilmette. To find out more about properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, visit the National Park Service website at <http://www.nps.gov/nr/research/index.htm>.

Will the Village's National Register Historic District nomination affect The Joseph Sears School? No. All properties owned by The Joseph Sears School are not included in the proposed district.

Can I elect not to have my property included in the proposed district? The process for considering National Register District nominations does not include provisions to allow individual property owners to choose not to be included in the boundaries of a proposed district. Property owners may express their opposition to the proposed historic district to the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. If a majority of property owners oppose the creation of a district, the proposed district will not officially be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Do historic districts impact property values in the community? According to the Village's consultants, who each have over 30 years experience in architectural history and historic preservation, numerous studies on historic designation and property values have been done over the years. Of these, a majority show that historic designation increases property values, while the remainder shows it maintains property values.

For detailed information on the Village's nomination or the National Register of Historic Places please stop by Village Hall or consult the Village website, www.villageofkenilworth.org.