

### Protect Your Heritage

**"We do not  
inherit the  
earth from our  
ancestors; we  
borrow it from  
our children."**

— Chief Seattle

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## Village Council Sets Ambitious Environmental Agenda

Since adopting the Greenest Region Compact in March (see our Spring newsletter), the Downers Grove Village Council has continued its pursuit of environmentally sustainable policies and practices with an ambitious set of goals in the long-range plan for 2023-2025. Implementation of these goals is already beginning.

The two-year plan, adopted in September, contains several Priority Action Items of interest. These items reflect Council priorities and serve as the Village's work plan from September 2023 through May 2025. First and most importantly, it calls for developing a village Environmental Sustainability Plan, to be accomplished with the assistance of a revived Environmental Commission and a staff person to be hired with environmental expertise. The village has posted a notice for the staff position, and the first meeting of the Environmental Commission is scheduled for November 16.

The titles and expected work schedule for these items are summarized in the chart below, and full descriptions may be found at

[https://www.downers.us/corecode/uploads/document6/uploaded\\_pdfs/corecode/MOT%202023-10017%20-%202023-2025%20Long%20Range%20Plan%20-%209-5-2023\\_24482\\_1047.pdf](https://www.downers.us/corecode/uploads/document6/uploaded_pdfs/corecode/MOT%202023-10017%20-%202023-2025%20Long%20Range%20Plan%20-%209-5-2023_24482_1047.pdf)

### Proposed 2023-25 Priority Action Items and Work Plan

	2023 Q4	2024 Q1	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2024 Q4	2025 Q1	2025 Q2	Beyond
Civic Center Project								
Replace ERP System								
Lead Service Line Replacement Plan								→
Building Codes Update								
Meadowbrook TIF and RDA								
Ogden TIF Extension								
Comprehensive Plan Update								
Environmental Sustainability Plan								
Downtown Hardscape/Landscape								
Enhance Downtown Outdoor Dining								
Enhanced Bike & Ped Plan								
Fairview Area Plan Implementation								→
Review DEI Practices								→
Public Safety Pension Stabilization								
Video Gaming								
Sign Ordinance Amendments								
Review Public Tree Planting Practices								
Consider Private Tree Regulations								

You can see the village's job posting for an Environmental Sustainability Coordinator at <https://villageofdownersgroveemployees.muniselfservice.com/employmentopportunities/default.aspx>

## Protect Your Heritage

### PDHA Directors

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance is a 27-year old, Illinois not-for-profit corporation with charitable group status from the Internal Revenue Service. PDHA's Board of Directors manages its activities.

The following people are

PDHA Officers:

Chair Ken Lerner,

Chair Pro-Tem

Chris Saricks,

Secretary

Mark Bragen,

Treasurer

Gordon Goodman,

and

PDHA Directors:

Marge Earl,

Rich Kulovany, &

John Schofield

We thank departing director Mark Thoman for his many years of service.

Newsletter

Editing by

G. Goodman

Logo designed by

Kate Earl

Photos by

Ken Lerner, &  
Marcello Rodarte

## Environmental Agenda (CONTINUED)

- The long-range plan sets an overall policy goal of environmental stewardship: "The Village should act as a steward of public resources to achieve financial, environmental and neighborhood sustainability. ... Environmental sustainability refers to the Village's responsibility to deliver its services in a way that protects or enhances natural resources. The Village seizes opportunities to 'green' its operations when possible, whether by seeking grants to introduce new environmentally friendly practices or by seeking the most environmentally friendly option for existing services."

- The Sustainability Plan will be developed in conjunction with a revised village Comprehensive Plan and other plans, including a revised bikeway and pedestrian plan. In addition, the long-range plan includes two items that PDHA has long advocated: a review of village tree planting policies and practices, and consideration of a private tree protection ordinance.

- The tree planting review is intended to, "identify additional areas where public trees could be planted and to increase the total number of public trees within the Village."

- The tree protection ordinance would include "regulations intended to reduce or minimize the number of privately owned trees removed in conjunction with construction and development activities. The regulations would focus on creating awareness of the existing privately owned trees that may be affected by the proposed construction and development activities. The Ordinance may be similar to the voluntary historic preservation ordinance. The Ordinance may require a mandatory submittal and review process while implementation of the regulations may not be mandatory." – Ken Lerner

## Chair Ken Lerner's Year End Summary & Message

I just want to highlight some of the PDHA's activities and accomplishments this year –

- **Advocacy:** Advocated for Village policies including adoption of the Greenest Region Compact, revival of the Environmental Commission, development of a village Environmental Sustainability Plan, hiring of an environmental coordinator, review of village tree planting policies, and consideration of a tree protection ordinance. All of these measures are in various stages of adoption and development. Our efforts included submitting written comments on proposals, oral comments during public meetings, and inviting village officials to meet with us and other environmental advocates at informal face to face meetings.

- **Voter information:** PDHA worked with the village communications department, Greener Grove, and other volunteers to develop questions for candidates for Mayor, Village Council and the District 99 School Board. Written answers from candidates were posted on the PDHA website, and video responses were posted on YouTube and referenced on the Village website.

- **Donations and Subsidies:** Support for environmental programs through donations, including donations to the Park District for tree planting on Arbor Day and learning supplies for the Wonder Woods program; and a donation to Downers Grove School District 58 to offset expenses for the Wonder Woods program. We also donate annually to the Illinois Environmental Coalition, Chicago Wilderness, and Landmarks Illinois to support their advocacy and educational programs on nature and historic preservation.



*Kids visit wetlands in Lyman Woods during their Wonder Woods experience.*

## Belmont Prairie Wildflower Walks

Our annual Belmont Prairie Wildflower Walk proved to be “wildly” popular this year, leading to additional walks being scheduled (and rescheduled, as weather intervened). In all there were three walks, in June, September and October. Our thanks to naturalist Lance Herning for his flexibility and his informative and entertaining guided tours.

The June walk focused on the spring/summer array of native vegetation that is the glory of the Prairie, and the fall excursions highlighted the late-season color – dominated by yellow and purple that is the hallmark of Illinois' autumn wildflower season. Several species of aster – smooth, hairy, heath, and New England – were in prominent bloom on the prairie, along with tall coreopsis, goldenrod, sunflower, stiff (and tall) goldenrod, a few blazing stars, Indian grass, little bluestem, and rattlesnake master.



June 2023 Belmont Prairie Wildflower Walk

Lance noted that a stand of Kankakee mallow, an endangered species endemic to an island in the Kankakee River, but occasionally found volunteering elsewhere, had apparently succumbed to ecosystem change in recent years. Otherwise the Prairie was in pretty good shape thanks to the stewardship of both the Downers Grove Park District and the many volunteers who help maintain it.

– Chris Saricks and Ken Lerner

## 1894 Bagley House Tour



Start the holiday season on Friday, December 1 with a rare tour from 6-8 PM of one of Frank Lloyd Wright's earliest independent commissions. This Dutch Colonial house was built in 1894 for Frederick and Grace Bagley and recently awarded landmark status in the Village of Hinsdale. This event is sponsored by Friends of the Edwards House and includes the special exhibit *Finding Grace*. The exhibit curators rediscovered the extraordinary achievements of Grace Bagley while researching the history of the house. A presentation will highlight her life of service that encompassed social reform on a national level. Light refreshments including wine, beer and hors d'oeuvres will be served. Tickets are \$25. For details and to signup, please see <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/tour-of-frank-lloyd-wrights-bagley-house-and-exhibit-of-finding-grace-tickets-752141394157?aff=oddttdcreator>. – Gordon Goodman and Ken Lerner

## Summary & Message (CONTINUED)

- Public outreach: We communicate through newsletters like this one, in the spring and fall; through our website and Facebook page, through our sponsorship of events, and occasional emails to our members and friends. This year we sponsored four wildflower walks to highlight our local natural areas, and one public lecture about our local oak ecosystems, cosponsored with the Friends of the Edwards House. Our website is continually updated to highlight local events and add links of interest. We get suggestions from across the country for references to add to our links page, which we screen and post as appropriate.

- Direct Action: Four times a year, PDHA volunteers pick up litter along Highland Avenue from 39<sup>th</sup> Street to 31<sup>st</sup> Street, adjacent to Lyman Woods, to beautify this area as part of the DuPage County adopt-a-highway program.

All of these activities depend on two things: time and money. My heartfelt thanks go out to our intrepid volunteers who give of their time and energy, and to our donors who give generously to support our activities and provide funds for us to pass through to the Park District, School District and other organizations to promote environmental and historic preservation goals. Your support in either of these categories would be greatly appreciated and would help us have another successful year in 2024! Thank you. – Ken Lerner

*Please Join Us  
On Our 2024  
Highland Ave.  
Adopt-A-Highway  
CLEAN-UP DAYS*

**April 13**

**June 8**

**August 10**

**October 5**

**Saturday**

**8:30-10:30 AM**

**Email us for more  
information.**

*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!*

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

**PDHA  
Donate**





## Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance

P.O. Box 422  
Downers Grove, Illinois 60515



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## Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance Fall 2023 Newsletter

**"We do not inherit the earth  
from our ancestors;  
we borrow it  
from our children."**

— Chief Seattle

Check our website [www.PDHA.org](http://www.PDHA.org) for more information.

**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.

You can [click here to make TAX-DEDUCTIBLE VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION](#) of \$10 or more to help the Alliance defray expenses, but such a contribution is **not** required for your membership. Your email address will allow us to keep you informed of future events.

**[Email us at info@pdha.org](mailto:info@pdha.org) to receive your PDHA Newsletter in its full color digital version with live action links to additional online information!**