

**VILLAGE OF BARRINGTON HILLS
PLAN COMMISSION
April 13, 2009**

The regular meeting of the Village of Barrington Hills Plan Commission was called to order by Chairman Bosworth at 7:30 p.m.

Commission Members Present: Kenneth Bosworth, Chairman
 Julie Joyce
 Lou Anne Majewski
 Joseph Messer
 James O'Donnell
 David Stieper

Absent: Patrick Hennelly
 George Gottlieb
 Peter Grande

PREVIOUS MINUTES: Commissioner Majewski made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Stieper, to approve the February 9, 2009 minutes as presented. Motion carried.

EXTERIOR LIGHTING: Chairman Bosworth stated that he will be working to revise the current draft lighting ordinance.

NEW BUSINESS: The Plan Commission has requested staff to find representatives in various professions to come in and present information regarding lighting. This education will help the Commission to learn different perspectives as they work through the ordinance process. The following information was presented by representatives of the landscape lighting profession.

Commissioner Joyce introduced Mitch Beiser, President of Night Light, Inc. and Tom Kusmerz, Vice President of The Barn Nursery, to provide a professional opinion on landscape and outdoor lighting and current standards in the field.

Mr. Beiser opened by stating that he is a licensed electrical engineer with 25 years of experience in landscape lighting equaling approximately 2,000 residences in the Chicago metropolitan area, including Barrington Hills. He has also worked as a consultant to various municipalities, including Long Grove, Burr Ridge and Highland Park, as they've worked on lighting ordinances.

Mr. Beiser's comments reflected his philosophy that lighting, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder. He believes that the issue of regulating exterior lighting is subjective and should be regulated through guidelines instead of ordinance. Mr. Beiser stated that quantitative lighting issues such as "light trespass" and "glare" are hard to define.

Mr. Beiser also predicted that LEDs are the next generation of lighting. He suggested that LED technology should be incorporated into the draft lighting ordinance. He also suggested “lumens” to be the language used when describing the amount of light emitted by a given source. Lumens are used by lighting contractors, consumers and designers.

Chairman Bosworth asked if consumers were using shielded and sensor lights for their homes. Mr. Beiser answered by stating that people are using these types of fixtures to save on power consumption.

Commissioner Messer pointed out two different lighting issues that the Village is facing, 1) protection of the Dark Sky, and 2) “billboard” homes. Commissioner Messer shared that the majority of outdoor lighting throughout the Village is nominal, but there are some homes that are washed with light and can be seen for miles. He asked Mr. Beiser for suggestions on dealing with these issues. Mr. Beiser responded by agreeing that too much light is obnoxious and unattractive and it is a struggle to make everyone happy. However, with proper techniques and education, billboard homes can be toned down. For instance, the color of the home can make a difference as to the brightness of a light.

Chairman Bosworth shared with Mr. Beiser that the Ad Hoc Lighting Committee took an inventory of outdoor lighting throughout the Village to determine what exactly residents were lighting. He further stated that the Plan Commission is not in favor of lighting up the sky. Commissioner Stieper added that the recent phenomenon of mega mansions and the lighting of them raise an issue when determining a measure of light trespass for a five acre lot, a possible diminution of the community character. Mr. Beiser agreed that the size of a house is a factor in determining the amount of output and the type of light fixture used for landscaping.

Commissioner Messer asked about tree lights and their impact on the environment. Mr. Beiser said that most landscape lighting is low voltage and does not affect trees or animals. He further stated that Morton Arboretum is a client of his that uses low voltage accent lighting to display trees and provide safety around their visitor building.

Commissioner O’Donnell asked if solar lighting was an option for landscape lighting. Mr. Beiser replied that solar lighting does not emit enough illumination. He further mentioned that the issue is not the source of the lighting, but the amount of illumination emitted, as well as the number of light fixtures. Another issue is the measurability of light. Lumens are measurable with the aid of a light meter. For example, the light emitted from the full moon equals one foot candle.

Trustee Knoop highlighted two points of correction to Mr. Beiser, 1) Barrington Hills is different than its neighboring communities because the minimum lot size is five acres, and other ordinances do not address this acreage, and 2) when lights are hanging from the tree tops, they indeed disrupt the view of the sky of someone looking up from below. Mr.

Beiser once again said that lighting and its aesthetics is in the eye of the beholder and is very hard to enforce. He further added that it is a subjective issue where creative balance is a fine line.

Chairman Bosworth closed the presentation by thanking the presenters for their sharing their information and stating that the Plan Commission will go forward with the draft ordinance process. He added that the draft will likely undergo several changes before final submission to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

TRUSTEE'S REPORT: Trustee Knoop reported that the Village met with an International Dark-Sky Association Advisory Committee who applauds the Village for its goals and accomplishments. He also shared that the Village has a good chance at being designated as a Dark Sky Community. Trustee Knoop reminded the Commission that the Board of Trustees approved the newly established IYA design for this year's Vehicle Sticker, and that the original Village logo will return next year.

Trustee Knoop updated the Commission on election matters, sharing that the overall consensus of those running was the importance of preserving the heritage of the Village.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, a motion to Adjourn was made by Commissioner Messer and seconded by Commissioner Stieper at 8:25 p.m.