



Village of Downers Grove

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## Historic Preservation and Design Review Board – Agenda

*Table 1 - Detailed information on this Board or Commission meeting.*

<b>Meeting Location</b>	Civic Center – Betty Cheever Council Chambers
<b>Meeting Address</b>	850 Curtiss St., Downers Grove, IL 60515
<b>Meeting Date</b>	May 20th, 2026 at 7:00 PM

### Call to Order.

### Roll Call.

### Approval of Minutes.

- January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2026.

### New Business.

#### **1846 Israel Blodgett House and the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom.**

The Downers Grove Park District will provide an overview about the Network to Freedom and the research/application process associated with obtaining this designation. Additionally, the Downers Grove Park District will share the connection of the Blodgett House and other Underground Railroad sites in DuPage County.

**Old Business.**

**Public Comment.**

**Adjournment.**



Village of Downers Grove

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## Historic Preservation and Design Review Board – Minutes

*Table 1 - Detailed information on this Board or Commission meeting.*

<b>Meeting Location</b>	Civic Center – Betty Cheever Council Chambers
<b>Meeting Address</b>	850 Curtiss St., Downers Grove, IL 60515
<b>Meeting Date</b>	January 21, 2026 at 7:00 PM

### **Call to Order.**

### **Roll Call.**

### **Approval of Minutes.**

#### **A. December 17, 2025.**

Motion by Mr. VerVers, second by Ms. Brooks to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2025 meeting.

### **Public Hearing.**

#### **A. File 25-CDA-0003.**

A petition seeking a Certificate of Design Appropriateness to review the design of seven (7) attached homes for the property commonly known as 902 Maple Avenue, Downers Grove, IL (PIN 09-08-307-023). Barriere Construction, Petitioner and Aran Holdings LLC, Owner.

Flora Leon, Senior Planner, discussed the Certificate of Design Appropriateness request for 902 Maple Avenue. She gave an overview of the Downtown Design

Guidelines and review process, and explained that the petitioner is seeking a Certificate of Design Appropriateness for the design of seven attached homes at 902 Maple Avenue, where the property is zoned Downtown Transition (DT). She said that in the Zoning Ordinance, attached houses are allowed by right in the DT District and do not require Village Council approval. She noted that this design review process is under HPDRB's purview, and the proposed development complies with regulations of the zoning ordinance. Staff received public comment through email and this was continued from the December 17, 2025 meeting to allow the petitioner to address some of those comments and concerns. The focus of tonight's meeting is to review and discuss those and determine if the petitioner addressed each item, which include considering the use of a residential door, adding an entry canopy detail, looking at window design to create a more residential feel, and include a detailed cornice feature. Staff found that the Certificate of Design Appropriateness standards for approval were met and recommended approval.

Bill Rodon Hornoff, from 2RZ Architecture, discussed the four principal changes that were made, which include the elimination of the floor to ceiling glass windows that are now are more punched openings with a larger frame, a solid wood door with a glass transom, the addition of a wall sconce, adding piano keys to the cornice, and adding thickness to the canopy with a three-step trend and cornice. He noted that the materials have not changed.

Ms. Brooks commented that the original Geolam screening was brown, but the it now looks gray. She asked which color it was going to be. She also asked if the accordion bride is now also in the Geolam. Mr. Rodon Hornoff answered that it is the same color and material, which is teak, and stated that the accordion bride was already in the Geolam.

Ms. Brooks inquired if the wood door would be a wood finish or painted. Mr. Rodon Hornoff stated that right now they are showing painted finish but it is something they still have to work out.

Ms. Kolev expressed that the project is beautiful and very well designed. She felt it was well portioned to its location and would be a great addition to that corner.

Ch. Gassen appreciated the effort they put in to responding to their comments.

Ch. Gassen asked for public testimony.

Christine Martin agreed the building is nice looking. She understood this was in an area that is Downtown Transitional, but it affects the surrounding property values. She shared that in her experience with the Downers Grove Village, the resident is never prioritized. She commented that the house itself is a beautiful home and said to be inhabitable, but that is not true. She added that Maple Avenue is known as one of the very last historical streets, and they have petitioned to have classical architecture brought into this and had a drawing done of what they would like for it to look like. Ms. Martin added that the Downtown Transitional Guidelines are intended to accommodate and promote transitional land use and development patterns between the Downtown Core and Downtown business districts and the nearby low density residential areas, and intended to help prevent intensive downtown development from encroaching into staple residential areas. She said this building encroaches onto the residents.

A resident (unidentified) commented that the building design is great fundamentally, footprint wise, but they need to blend into the streetscape of what Maple Avenue truly is. He suggested incorporating some of the design of the house they are tearing down, such as the red brick, chimney, green roof, or I-window. He said there are other places in town where they can build an awesome structure that looks new. He stated that on Maple Avenue, east of Washington, they should really think about what is put there moving forward, as they need something with character, not modern, for the home homeowners on that street who bought there for that reason. He asked them to think about this because once it's gone, it's gone.

Ian Ogden shared that he is on the Board of the Historical Society, co-chair of Friends of the Edwards House, and his late mother spent the 80s fighting to keep the brick streets intact in Downers Grove. He said he loves to preserve things but knows they are not going to do that in this situation. He felt the changes being made to this building were not bad, and believe they can preserve places in this town and work within the Downtown Design Guidelines. He stated that as much as he would like it to look vintage, architecture is an art form and they are not there to legislate that, so he felt this was an acceptable building for the location.

Bill Curran did not oppose putting a building there, but he had concerns about the style and design of the building. He pointed out there were a lot of negative comments at the last meeting about this building, and wanted to know why the architect and builder were so opposed to designing a building that addressed more of the style of the existing residential homes and historic neighborhood. He said the location of the building requires it to follow the DG Transition rules, not their personal preference for modern buildings, and that should have been taken into consideration before submitting a design. He stated the purpose of the Design Review Board was to make sure the design of the building blends with the established neighborhood it is transitioning into, and the Board should request a redesign more in line with the existing neighborhood and vintage homes on Maple Avenue. He added this will impact the value of their homes and diminish the number of people wanting to buy in the neighborhood.

Dave Williams shared concerned that this is the second time they have done something like this in this location and the discussion has been the same, that it did not fit in with the neighborhood and the spirit of the street is being lost. He agreed that a classical design or something more transitional would be important and did not understand why developers are not willing to take that into consideration.

Katie Callahan spoke about the driveway egress on the Washington side. She said it looks like the parking currently there is not going to be available. She

stated that the access for the driveway looks to be around fifty (50) feet north of the stop sign/intersection area. She said she lives about seventy (75) feet north of that, and on an average day, there are people driving through that intersection extremely fast, making it dangerous, and this plan adds seven (7) to fourteen (14) additional cars there, which is extremely dangerous.

Selma Moberg agreed the intersection there is dangerous, which will get even worse with this architectural rendering. She was surprised to see the rendering of what this could possibly look like, as it has no place in this neighborhood, does not transition whatsoever, and will diminish their property values. She pointed out they said supplies would be put on site, but that is not possible. She asked how they were going to do that and keep traffic flowing. She expressed there are a lot of people who would love to see a beautiful transitional building. She asked them to go over the parking that is going to be taken out on Washington and the cutbacks on Maple Avenue.

Mr. VerVers asked if the picture shown was what they wanted the building look like. The public answered yes.

Mr. VerVers asked how many historical landmarked homes were on Maple Avenue east of Washington. Mr. Zawila responded there are four landmarked properties on Maple Avenue.

Ms. Leon stated that in regard to the question about parking reduction on Washington Street, staff estimates that about two parallel parking stalls would be lost, but on-street parking is not under the purview of the Historic Preservation and Design Review Board. She stated that if this gets recommended for approval, that would be reviewed under a formal building permit and the transportation manager would review this.

Ch. Gassen clarified the comment about the last time a proposal happened for this property did not come through this board and was not rejected, the developer decided not to do the project.

Ms. Kolev stated it was important for staff to clarify about the transitional zoning comment that this is encroaching into this neighborhood, as the transitional guidelines are about density.

Mr. Zawila said the idea is that the design of the building could work off of both the downtown and residential areas in town, as it does not specify that one particular land use or development type is the preference for the type of design on the site.

Ch. Gassen called the petitioner back up to address comments or questions.

Adam Berry thanked them all for being there and participating in the discussion. He felt the building turned out better because of their input and the revised proposed townhomes reflect the intent of the Downtown Design Guidelines and incorporate the feedback and suggestions they received from the public and board members. He said they believe the project will be a positive addition to the community and will help create a smooth and visual cohesive transition between the downtown area and surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Ch. Gassen asked the Board to deliberate based on the evidence presented.

Ms. Brooks addressed that she researched the Geolam further after the last meeting and it seems to hold up pretty well, so she was no longer concerned about that material.

Ms. Purcell felt the updated design made the building look more residential, but would still personally like to see something similar to the picture that was brought up or the townhomes on Curtiss.

Mr. VerVers shared it looks like there are 41 homes on that spot on Maple, so just under eight percent (8%) of the homes located in that area are designated historic landmarks.

Ms. Kolev felt this was a great transitional design for the area and very nicely proportioned for the location.

Ch. Gassen agreed the massing is appropriate and matches much better with the adjacent residential from a massing standpoint than it does the Dash on Washington Street. She expressed that the architects in the room probably all have a different idea of what should be built here and the style, which is one reason why the guidelines do not dictate architectural style. Therefore, while this might not be what she would put in that lot, she felt it met all the design guidelines and felt more residential now that there is less glass.

Ms. Brooks moved, seconded by Ms. Kolev, that based on the petitioner's submittal, the staff report and the testimony presented, it is found that the petitioner has met the standards for approval for a Certificate of Design Appropriateness for 902 Maple Avenue for design of the proposed seven (7) attached houses with the following condition:

1. The building materials shall be substantially consistent with the approved plans and material board as verified by the Village and consistent with the Downtown Design Guidelines.

Roll Call:

AYE: Ms. Purcell, Ms. Kolev, Ms. Brooks, Mr. VerVers, Ch. Gassen

NAY: None.

Motion Approved. Vote: 5-0

## **New Business.**

There were none.

## **Old Business.**

There was none.

## **Public Comments.**

Christine Martin expressed that this is another board that never listens to the residents, and this board and the Downers Grove Council never consider the residents first and that is despicable and wrong. She expressed they take the contractor's money first and they are destroying this town.

Ian Ogden commented that the Historical Society website shows four landmarks and six historic homes or centennial homes on Maple Avenue, east of Washington.

Selma Moberg was sad to see the Village Council drop this into this Board's lap so they could wash their hands of it and prevent the public from fighting it anymore.

## **Adjournment.**

The meeting was adjourned. Upon a motion by Commissioner Kolev, second by Commissioner Brooks. A voice vote followed and the motion passed unanimously.