



President Cohen called the Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners to order at 8:45 a.m.

Upon a roll of Commissioners being called, the following were

Present: Cohen, Mahoney, Venouziou, Perry

Absent: Coleman

Staff present: Knitter, Ritter, Webber Absent: none

District Attorney present: Dennis Walsh (Klein, Thorpe, & Jenkins)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Krehbiel Family Trust Representative – Rebecca, Groundskeeper – Lenny, Family Member - Rick

SITE TOUR – 8218 EDGEWOOD DRIVE, DOWNERS GROVE

Meeting at Fred C. Hohnke Community Center - Executive Director Knitter began the meeting by distributing details of the property from the DuPage County parcel viewer, including its layout. Executive Director Knitter explained the history of how the possibility of the land donation came to be. Executive Director Knitter detailed the board's challenges in accepting the donation, including limited access to the property, which is currently a private drive off 83rd Street. The private drive is narrow and cannot accommodate two-way traffic. Additionally, the property has a preservation easement on the home held by Landmarks Illinois and a conservation easement held by Openlands, both of which limit alterations to the building and surrounding land.

Attorney Walsh explained to the Board the limitations both easements create. Commissioner Perry inquired who or what agency would have to approve any changes to the property, and who the Openlands organization is. Attorney Walsh explained that Openlands is a Not-for-profit organization created to protect the natural and open spaces in Illinois. Attorney Walsh went on to explain that the easements create passive uses that the District could engage in without permission. Attorney Walsh suggested meeting with Openlands before moving forward with any negotiations. If Openlands is not open to alteration, the District would not have a suitable use for recreation. Attorney Walsh also explained that the house on the property, while gorgeous, is currently not ADA-compliant, which could complicate matters given the preservation easement in place.

Executive Director Knitter explained to the Board that this decision could take months, if not longer. She went on to explain that guidance from the Board will be requested after a legal summation is provided. The group then left the Fred C. Hohnke Community Center and drove to the property for the tour.

Tour of Property Grounds and Structures – Upon arriving at 8218 Edgewood Drive, District representatives were met by Rebecca, the representative of the Krehbiel Family Trust and Lenny, the property groundskeeper. The group proceeded into the house, where Rebecca gave a history of the house, which was built in 1935 by Harold Zuck, a student of Frank Lloyd Wright, and later expanded in 1977. The property is 10.94 acres with woodlands, a koi pond, and many trails. Trails may be added throughout the property, and any changes would need to be approved by the Family Trust Board.

Commissioner Cohen asked Rebecca about the family's motivation for the donation. Rebecca stated that the Board wants to preserve the house and grounds and not sell it. No one currently lives in the house, so they would like to see it put to a positive use. Commissioner Mahoney asked if the property was in Woodridge, to which Executive Director Knitter explained it is unincorporated Downers Grove. Rebecca stated that other agencies had been contacted regarding the donation; however, they did not ultimately show interest. At this time, the Board of Commissioners toured the house individually, noting the property's vast size. Commissioner Mahoney inquired about the value of the property. Rebecca stated that a formal appraisal in 2021 valued the property at \$1.7 million and that the current estimated value exceeds \$3 million.

Finishing the tour of the house, Rebecca showed the garage and explained the garage is also included in the property donation and can be used to store items needed for maintenance. Commissioner Perry asked if they could see the area on the property where a house had previously been located. The group was led to the site in question and was notified by Rebecca that the far east side of the property was purchased in 2014, and the house in that area was then knocked down and removed. Discussion ensued regarding possible access to the site, and Rebecca mentioned that the best approach would be to build an access driveway off Ide Drive, between Dogwood Drive and Fringetree Lane. The conservation easement and Openlands would have to approve any such road, as tree clearing would be required.

Executive Director Knitter asked the Board if they had any more questions, to which there were none. Attorney Walsh asked Rebecca whether she had contacts with Openlands and Landmarks Illinois, to which she replied that she did and would share them. Rebecca stated that the Family Trust Board would like to have an idea soon of the level of endowment or maintenance fund that may be required by the District to maintain the property. Executive Director Knitter stated that it is too early to provide a figure, as there is no guarantee the site could be used for recreational purposes or that the requested modifications could be made.

Executive Director Knitter explained the property's vision to the Board and possible uses—SEASPAR, camping, fishing instruction, and other nature-based programs. Upon presenting the need to provide recreational uses to the public and asking whether there were any further questions, the Executive Director requested an adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, a motion to adjourn was requested. MOTION by Venouziou, seconded by Perry, to adjourn the special board meeting at 9:48 a.m. President Cohen requested a voice vote to adjourn the special board meeting of November 11, 2025.

Upon a roll of Commissioners being called, the following were

Present: Venouziou, Perry, and Cohen

Absent: Mahoney and Coleman

ALL AYES. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted.



Jack Mahoney, Secretary