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April 15th, 2008

Dear Members of the Glen Ellyn Village and Park District Boards,

Sometimes, in the course of progress, the value of something that we already have is overlooked. In the fall of 2006, residents spoke out against plans to demolish the historic Main Street Recreation Center. As a sign of respect for the wishes of the citizens of the community, the Park District changed its plans and not only updated the facility but also restored the façade to its original 1920 design.

Once again, our residents have pointed out that something of great value could be lost for the sake of progress. A beautiful stand of native trees that is a remnant of historic Babcock Grove may be cut down to become a detention basin and part time soccer field at Ackerman Park. The walnuts, cherry and elms that help to make up this woods, are the descendants of a grove that once stretched from Main Street in Glen Ellyn to Lombard. In 1833, an early pioneer family by the name of Babcock staked a claim in the woodland, and gave it the name Babcock's Grove. Soon other pioneer families carved out homesteads in the grove, including Deacon Winslow Churchill and John Davis Ackerman.

The recent Park District survey by the Kramer Tree Company has underlined the value of this mature collection of trees. For instance, a 25" black walnut, a 31" American elm and a 42" black cherry are just some of the exceptional examples. 78 black walnuts, which have been designated a protected variety by the Village, would be lost if this plan goes forward. Unlike other nearby degraded woodlands that include high numbers of invasive, undesirable species, only 5% of this grove is non-native. Additionally, varieties such as walnut, cherry, elm, cottonwood and ash can take periodic flooding, acting as an ideal natural filtration system for run-off that a detention basin could not match in effectiveness.

That trees are dear to the hearts of the residents of Glen Ellyn was evidenced by the over 90 citizens who braved the rainstorm last Thursday night to attend the Park District's information session on the Ackerman project. This woodland is an historical and environmental asset to the Village that, once lost, can never be replaced.

Citizens for Glen Ellyn Preservation ask that the Park District revise its plans for Ackerman Park to find a way to serve its residents without compromising the natural environment. **We strongly urge the Park District and Village Boards to begin discussions to amend their inter-governmental agreement in order to save Ackerman Woods.**

Sincerely,

Citizens for Glen Ellyn Preservation Board:

Chris Wilson, President, Genell Scheurell, Past President, Linda Gilbert, Vice President, Debra O'Connor, Secretary, Eleanor Saliamonas, Treasurer, George Allen, Kathy Cornell, Tim Loftus, Marilyn Wiedemann, Betsy Summers