



Village of Homewood
Rail Committee
2015 Annual Report

Homewood, IL 60430

1. **PURPOSE:**

The Illini Rail Corridor Committee was created to serve as an advisory committee to the Village Board with the passage of Resolution R-1768 on December 18, 2001. The purpose of the Committee is to develop and review projects and programs in cooperation with the Illini Rail Corridor Coalition and to make recommendations on railroad related issues affecting the Village that require action by the Village Board. The Committee's first meeting was held on February 6, 2002. On October 12, 2004 the Village Board passed resolution R-1879 "A Resolution Repealing Resolution R-1768 and Establishing the Homewood Rail Committee." The purpose of the Committee now is defined as:

The Homewood Rail Committee is hereby officially established for the purpose of developing and reviewing projects and programs that will assist in improving rail service in the Village of Homewood and will promote the rail heritage of the community. In addition, the Homewood Rail Committee will continue to act as the Village's liaison with the Illini Rail Corridor Coalition. The Homewood Rail Committee shall serve as an advisory committee to the President and Board of Trustees and shall make recommendations on railroad related issues affecting the Village that require action by the Village Board.

The following issues were the major priorities of the Committee during calendar year 2015:

2. **MEMBERSHIP:** *List members, original appointment, term expiration*

Membership	Original Appointment	Term Expires
Tom Grant	02/11/03	01/08/17
Sharon Gunderson	02/11/03	01/08/15
Dan Gunderson	02/11/03	01/08/15
Joe Krol	12/14/04	01/08/17
Wally Hein	12/14/04	01/08/17
Phil Dillman	10/27/09	01/08/17
Bill Woelfel	11/10/09	01/08/13

Staff Liaison: Bob Growbowski/Allisa Opyd
Board Liaison: Jay Heiferman

3. **SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS:**
 2/4/15 3/25/15 5/6/15
 8/19/15 10/7/15 12/2/15

4. **ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

Rail Fest

Rail Fest was cancelled in 2014 and was revamped and returned May 16, 2015. The Rail Committee worked with the village event team to add new programming. The event was held only in the auditorium and for one day. Vendors sold memorabilia items, train collectables, and items associated with model railways. Train lay-outs were also in the auditorium as well as activities for children. Lil Obie took families around the block and the caboose was open for visitors. The event brought families from Chicago, western suburbs, and Indiana. This event was free and open to the public. The event was publicized in the following:

PRINT

Chicago Tribune Do It Now page included 5/15 - unavailable online

Daily Southtown Paige Fumo-Fox writing RR feature for Weekend Section
 5/15

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/daily-southtown/lifestyles/ct-sta-rail-show-st-0515-20150513-story.html>

Day-of Coverage by Frank Vaisvilas 5/17

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/daily-southtown/news/ct-sta-homewood-rail-fest-st-0518-20150517-story.html>

Angela Denk wrote feature on FM - run date TBD

WEB

Chicago Parent Posted Rail Fest release in May

<http://www.chicagoparent.com/resources/going-places/fairs--festivals/may/homewood-railroad-heritage-day>

HomewoodChronicle.com Eric Crump posted Rail Fest May 5

<http://hfchronicle.com/article/2015/may/03/homewood-rail-fest-may-16-taps-village-history-appeals-railroad-buffs-all-ages>

Lauren Traut posted FM on April 15

<http://patch.com/illinois/homewood-flossmoor/homewood-farmers-market-returns-season-may-23-0#>

Red Tricycle.com Kelly Agilon posted listing April 17 - will feature closer
 to event

<http://redtri.com/chicago/chug-chug-chug-to-the-homewood-rail-fest/>

TribLocal Brava posted RR on April 7

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/daily-southtown/community/chi-ugc-article-homewood-rail-fest-returns-saturday-may-16-f-2015-04-07-story.html>

Brava posted FM on April 17

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/orland-park-homer-glen/community/chi-ugc-article-homewood-farmers-market-opens-may-23-and-feat-2015-04-17-story.html>

Metromix.chicago.com Brava posted RR on April 7

<http://chicago.metromix.com/events/mmxchi-homewood-rail-fest-event>

Hobo Night

The 5th Annual Homewood Hobo Night was held October 10, from 6:30 to 8:30 at the Homewood Rail Park, at Chestnut and Park Ave. The event featured a wide variety of activities for ages 4 to 10-years old and beyond. One-man band M G Bailey performed train-themed songs along as well as lead a sing a-long. Storyteller Railroad Joe told rail stories from yester year. Attendees were encouraged to wear hobo costumes for the hobo costume contest. Attendees will created hobo sacs upon arrival with all the ingredients necessary for s'mores. Hobo Night took place at the Homewood Rail Park by the permanent IC locomotive and caboose and borders the Metra platform on Park Ave. This event was free and open to the public. The event was publicized in the following:

PRINT

Chicago Tribune

Web Behrens to use in “Just Kidding” listings w/ high resolution images on Sunday Oct 4 - however did not run

TV

WCIU-TV

You & Me This Morning rescheduled to Oct. 6 -

<http://www.wciu.com/videos/youandme/homewood-s-hobo-night>

WEB

ChicagoPatch.com

Lauren Traut posted story on 9/21

<http://patch.com/illinois/homewood-flossmoor/homewoods-hobo-night-rolls-back-town-oct-10-0>

H-F Chronicle.com

Eric Crump posted on 9/28

<http://hfchronicle.com/article/2015/sep/26/homewoods-hobo-night-feature-rail-themed-storytelling-and-music>

Rail Park

The Rail Park is located on the west side of the tracks just north of the Amtrak station. This park is home to a fully restored Illinois Central vintage locomotive and caboose. It is open to the public and provides a tangible link to the historic Illinois Central (IC) Railroad. The equipment was painted at a discounted rate, and CN railroad has volunteered to help maintain the caboose including any future repainting that may be necessary. The village has received request for photo opportunities at the Rail Park and for additional open times for the locomotive and caboose.

Train Watching Platform

The Rail Viewing Platform is located on the east side of the tracks, just south of the Pace bus turnaround area. Rail enthusiasts visit to view trains coming in and out of the Markham yards. This raised platform was completed in early 2007 and is located at approximately 18050 Harwood Avenue (the west side of Harwood Avenue one block south of Ridge Road). The Rail Viewing Platform provides the public an opportunity to view and photograph hundreds of trains that pass this location weekly. The Committee continues to work on installing educational signs at the platform to provide tourists with more information on what they are viewing on the tracks.

Amtrak Station Purchase

The goal is for the village to own the Amtrak Station, the village has tried to work with Canadian National on gaining the property; however, the offer has been rejected. The Committee is interested in utilizing the north end of the Amtrak Station, owned by Canadian National, for a Rail Museum. The plans would return the area to its original décor and maintain the area as a museum.

Respectfully Submitted By
Allisa Opyd
Rail Committee Staff Liaison
Community Events Manager