

Decorah Historical Preservation Commission
Minutes Sept. 11, 2017 Meeting (Final)

1. Meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m. by chair Mark Muggli. Present besides Muggli were commissioners Diane Scholl, Judy van der Linden and Hayley Jackson.

Also present: Kristina Wiltgen, Decorah Area Chamber of Commerce, Charlene Selbee, Winneshiek County Convention and Visitors' Bureau, and Adrienne Coffeen, Decorah resident who has applied to be a new commission member.

2. Review and approval of minutes of the June 5th meeting were postponed.

3. Re: Decorah Commercial Historic District

a. Mark reported that the U.S. government officially listed Decorah's commercial district on the National Register of Historic Places on Aug. 21.

b. Mark sent off the final budget request for the project grant today.

c. To celebrate the listing, a party was scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 3, 4-6 p.m., in the Chamber building, 507 W. Water Street, for researchers, downtown business owners and public officials. There may be a ribbon cutting at 4 p.m.

Commission members should each bring a snack. Mark will write a press release for the event, post a 300-word event announcement on the Northeast Iowa Blog, contact breweries about serving beer, and will make a few remarks after the ribbon cutting to thank people. Judy will call Chad about the ribbon cutting, talk to DGA about framed photos or mementos that may be appropriate for display, and send Mark her downtown map image. Diane will talk to folks at WCHS about photos or mementos. Mark and Hayley will try to enlarge a map of district.

Charlene reminded us she has paper cups, plates, napkins and lemonade that can be used for the event.

d. Because the district was approved, commissioners talked about numbers and types of signs needed. Members decided to focus on getting two relatively large entry signs, one each for the east and west ends of town, and a number of smaller signs to be added to street sign poles within the district. Sign color would be brown, to distinguish the commercial district from the residential Broadway-Phelps Park district with its blue signage.

Before next meeting, Mark will walk Broadway-Phelps Park district to see which and how many signs are posted, Judy will check and photograph intersections at either end of town, and Hayley will look into updated costs of signs at Iowa Prison Industries. Kris had volunteered to check with the Chamber on its brochure revision process, and can do that if she hasn't already.

e. Mark was disappointed in a letter sent to building owners by the state after the Aug. 21 listing. *He will call Joan Tupy about tax credits for her building.* Mark also noted that some recent remodels of building fronts have not been historically sensitive. There are no ordinances to guide building owners in their renovations and DHPC is only an advisory group. Commissioners talked about the need to educate

building and business owners. For the time being, *Mark will ask that emails from the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Board of Adjustment be sent to all DHPC members so that we can better keep up with proposed remodels.*

4. Regarding amending the Broadway-Phelps Park Historic District, Mark reported that Paula Mohr of the state office now says there is no need to re-survey all buildings in the original district. She recommends writing short, clear discussions for the two buildings we wish to add to the district, so that they are as similar as possible to discussions of individual buildings already in the district. *Mark and Diane together will work on discussions for St. Benedict's Church and the Decorah Public Library.*

5. Charles Altfillisch Project

a. Mark reported that Kris has obtained the Charles Altfillisch interview DVD, and that it is mostly about Decorah's dike project. *Mark and Hayley will listen to it.*

b. *Judy, Mark, Lois, Adrienne and Diane will meet Monday, Sept. 25 at 1 p.m. with David Wright and his mother at David's home on 5th Ave. Judy will ask David if we can record the session.* Judy suggested we each jot down 3-4 questions we have for David.

c. Diane has read Altfillisch's 1930s-40s ledger, and Kris has another ledger from Altfillisch's Mound Street home. Mark wondered if our commission might consider giving the 2018 historic preservation awards to several well-preserved Altfillisch homes in town.

6. Mark will serve on the Courthouse Advisory Committee as a representative of DHPC.

7. Possible continuation/permutations on the Landmark Project was tabled.

8. Hayley reported that in June she attended both the State Nominations Review Committee (SNRC) meeting, during which downtown Decorah's nomination to the NRHP was approved, and the Preserve Iowa Summit that followed it.

9. Mark reported that Janelle Pavlovec urged DHPC members to more closely monitor the city's planning and zoning and adjustments groups' activities.

10. Next meeting will be Wednesday, Oct. 4 from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

11. Meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.