

Decorah Historic Preservation Commission
FINAL Feb. 12, 2018 Meeting Minutes

1. **Roll call.** Meeting was called to order by DHPC chair Mark Muggli. Present were Adrienne Coffeen, Hayley Jackson, Kris Lynch, Diane Scholl and Judy van der Linden. Absent was commissioner Lois Humpal. Also present for part of the meeting was Janelle Pavlovec, Decorah resident.

2. **Review and approval of Minutes from Dec. 11, 2017, recorded and distributed by Commission secretary Judy van der Linden.** Minutes were approved without changes.

3. **DHPC Membership.** The commission will be short one person after Kris Lynch moves outside the city limits April 1. Mark mentioned Ryan Engelman and Judy mentioned David Wright as possible new members.

4. **Charles Altfillisch project.**

A. 2018 Historical Preservation Award. Of 13 Altfillisch homes suggested for the award, commissioners debated and eventually chose six as representative of Altfillisch's career. Mark moved and Judy seconded that the award be given to all six; the motion passed with one "nay." Homes are: 609 W. Broadway, 900 Pleasant Ave., 100 Pleasant Hill Dr., 801 Mound St., 303 Upper Broadway and 500 Fifth Ave. *Hayley will compose a letter to the six homeowners by the end of this week and email it out for commissioners' comments. Kris will find addresses for the six owners.* Tentative date for the award presentation is Monday, May 14. *Members will check calendars and email each other about availability in early May.* Decorah City Hall, an Altfillisch designed building, would be a good location. (Later in the meeting, Kris noted that City Hall employee Deb Hagensick has the DHPC award certificate template on her computer.)

5. **Decorah Commercial Historic District follow-up.**

A. Signage. Kris brought pictures of examples of historic district signs. Members agreed a standard sign with arrows would be needed at district boundaries. They also liked one style of street sign with an added curved section or "bump" on top that said "historic district" and gave the sign a distinctive shape. Final shape, color and cost were all discussed. *Kris will talk to Chad Bird to find out how to proceed.*

B. Tax credits. In light of recent tax legislation, *Mark will write a news release clarifying the status of state and federal tax credits for historic preservation.*

6. **Expanding Broadway-Phelps Park Historic District update.** Mark sent the draft to SHPO in early January and will report back after he talks with state preservation officials this week.

7. **Luther College Historic District update.** Mark and Ryan Engelman completed a draft with archival help from Hayley. Their draft is now being considered by the Luther College ad hoc committee. SHPO will need to consider the site inventory. A grant proposal will have to be written.

8. **Courthouse Advisory Committee update.** Mark reported the committee may meet in late February to discuss priorities for restoration and rehabilitation. The consulting architect may

attend. Mark will argue that restoring the courthouse windows to their original shape is important. Kris made three suggestions/comments: Any painting should be done with historically accurate colors; future improvements should be done sensitively, for example, multiple window air conditioners detract from the building's appearance, and blocking the main building entrance for security purposes, while understandable, is regrettable.

- 9. DHPC Municipal website revision.** Mark's DHPC text for the city website was added on Jan. 25. Judy thought the website was easy to use and the text was readable.
- 10. DHPC Social Media presence.** Hayley said she had not yet been added as an administrator for DHPC's Facebook page. *Mark will ask Kyril Henderson for more information about the page and ask Kyril to contact Hayley.* Other Facebook pages that may be of interest to us are "Historical Sites of Decorah and Winneshiek County" and Larry Peterson's "DHS Friends and Others."
- 11. Annual CLG Report due Feb. 28, 2018.** Mark said it is done except for some dates and titles.
- 12. Commissioner Reports.** Mark asked Chad Bird about Verizon's proposed new cell towers. Chad will request the company keep the downtown's historic flavor in mind when placing the towers. Mark also noted we may want to change our commission's logo at some time. Judy reported she attended the Jan. 16 webinar entitled "Historical Storytelling Through Technology," sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Presenters talked about developing apps and mobile websites that could be used by patrons to learn about historic districts. *Judy also said she would learn more about plaques for historic buildings in Michigan.* Adrienne discovered among Coffeen company memorabilia an article about A. N. Hanson, the Decorah city engineer who preceded Charles Altfillisch. She gave Mark a copy of the article. Mark noted someone could compile some biographical information about Charles Altfillisch before May's award ceremony. Kris reported that she has a call in to Alan Branhagen, a former friend and neighbor of Charles Altfillisch, and hopes to talk to him.
- 13. - 15.** Meeting adjourned before these items could be addressed.
- 16. Adjournment.** Meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.