

Decorah Historic Preservation Commission  
Aug. 12, 2019 Meeting Minutes (FINAL)

1. **Roll Call.** The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by vice-chair Hayley Jackson. Present were Adrienne Coffeen, Lois Humpal, Steve Kelsay, Mark Muggli via telephone and Judy van der Linden. Commissioner Diane Scholl was absent. Decorah resident Janelle Pavlovec, local businessman John Jenkins and Planning & Zoning member Llew Jenkins also attended.
2. **Review and approval of Minutes from July 8, 2019 meeting, distributed by Commission secretary Judy van der Linden.** MOTION -- Mark moved and Adrienne seconded approval of the minutes as written. Motion passed.
3. **Update on Review request to P&Z for C-3 facade replacement at 122 E. Water St.** Mark reported that he and Steve attended the July P&Z meeting to comment on the proposed board and batten facade. He said the owners could not afford brick, and that they planned to make upstairs windows similar in size and as tall as possible. P&Z approved the design. Commissioners confirmed the new facade is already in place.
4. **Main Street Program update.** Llew Jenkins said Decorah was not accepted into the Main Street program. The local Main Street steering committee will meet Friday with MSI representatives to learn why. The outcome is not general knowledge, but Llew sent a short press release about it to Decorah newspapers today.  
Because Main Street will not be in Decorah, John Jenkins spoke next about ways to protect the city's historic downtown. He will attend tonight's P&Z meeting and ask to be put on the agenda in September regarding proposed changes to the C-3 design ordinance and procedure. Steve and Lois will accompany him tonight to show DHPC's support. Among changes John suggested were: Reviewing and enforcing the permit checklist items within the ordinance; changing which building materials are allowed; including DHPC in some way in design review, and possibly adjusting timing in the ordinance so that DHPC and P&Z members have more time to study permit applications. Mark also suggested an additional category in the ordinance emphasizing windows as a design element for review.  
Commissioners discussed at length how DHPC might fit into the process. Llew suggested a workshop between DHPC and P&Z. She also recommended that Vesterheim Museum be included in the process somehow. Commissioners decided to (1) help make language changes in the current C-3 design ordinance (2) suggest permit applicants attend an optional but recommended consultation with DHPC before submitting their applications (3) suggest DHPC review all permit applications, then send them on to P&Z with a recommendation.  
*John, Mark and Steve will develop new language for the ordinance.*
5. **Discussion of Hobby House/Agriculture Building at Fairgrounds.** Mark reported that Steve Johnson learned that the Agriculture building at the county fairgrounds might be demolished. It's believed to be a Civilian Conservation Corps building with some historic value. *Mark will suggest to Steve J. that both historic preservation commissions work together to request information about the building and then proceed from there.*

- 6. DHPC website and NRHP nominations, survey reports and site inventories (newly available from SHPO).** Mark learned that SHPO wants to send each Iowa CLG the digital files of its nominations, survey reports and site inventories if it agrees to store and make the reports available in the future. Mark responded to the state that DHPC would like the Decorah files. He planned to post them on our web page. He was surprised when SHPO sent him the files for all of Winneshiek County, and asked commissioners whether DHPC should post all of them or only ones from the Decorah area. Members decided *Mark should contact Steve Johnson to say that DHPC will be responsible for city files and WCHPC can be responsible for county site files.* Mark noted that Paula Mohr believes site inventories have a different status and should not be posted on any website. They vary in thoroughness and some were judged years ago by SHPO. That judgement is not binding over time, Paula said, and problems may arise if a person reading the inventory doesn't realize that. Mark suggested posting our site inventories anyway, but perhaps in several categories and with explanatory information. He also encouraged commissioners to write up site inventory forms to keep track of research we've done, such as the research on the five Altfillisch homes that received the DHPC preservation award in 2018.
- 7. Commissioner Reports.** Hayley said that Paul Cutting will speak at a Winneshiek County Energy District breakfast at Porter House to talk about the museum's solar panels. *Hayley will send us an email with date and time (Sec. note: Aug. 20, 7:30 am.).* Mark noted the Preservation Fair in Dubuque Sept. 6-7 that addresses energy issues and historic buildings. He also reported that Luther College will fund all of the final nomination process for its proposed historic district, so Jan Full's work on it continues. Judy reported she researched the Chad Bird home, hoping to find proof that it was designed by Charles Altfillisch, but had no luck. Lois asked where to store copies of blueprints of an Altfillisch home at 401 E. Broadway that she recently purchased. *Judy will deposit the blueprint copies in our files at the library. Mark volunteered to work with both Lois and Judy to write site inventories for 401 E. Broadway and the Bird home.*
- 8. Public Comment.** Janelle said the city of Spillville recently approved a new building application that led to the immediate demolition of a historic log building on the site.
- 9. Possible upcoming meeting: Monday, September 9, 2019.** Commissioners agreed tentatively to meet on Thursday, Sept. 5 at 4:30 p.m. in the conference room in city hall.
- 10. Adjournment.** MOTION -- Lois made and Adrienne seconded a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.