

Decorah Historic Preservation Commission
Minutes of January 6, 2021 Meeting (FINAL)

1. **Roll Call.** Electronic meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m. by Mark Muggli, chairperson. Commissioners Mark Branum, Adrienne Coffeen, Hayley Jackson, Steve Kelsay, Diane Scholl and Judy van der Linden were present. Decorah resident Janelle Pavlovec attended via telephone.
2. **Review and approval of December 9, 2020 minutes. *Distributed by DHPC secretary Judy van der Linden.*** The chairperson declared the minutes approved as written.
3. **Murals in Historic Districts.** Mark M. will ask City Manager Chad Bird what progress he's made.
4. **Ingvoldstad Lumber trackage.** Mark M. reported several developments: Ed Epperly will talk to Jon Romelton and Mr. Sheridan of West Union and Lyle Otte will talk to other people he knows about coordinating moving the trackage; Kelly Reagan and David Wadsworth are both enthusiastic about having some of the track outside their businesses/former depots, and David will talk to the Winneshiek County Historic Preservation Commission about the project. *Mark will call Steve Johnson of WCHPC.* Steve Kelsay suggested some of the track might also be placed in the Trout Run Bowstring Bridge park on Hwy. 9, meaning it would be divided three ways among the park, David W. and Kelly R. Janelle suggested contacting former railroad employee Bill Elsbert of Decorah.
5. **Luther College Campus Historic District.** Mark M. learned from Jan Full that SHPO wants additional changes to her final draft of the district application. He's concerned about this development, but fairly certain she will follow through and make the changes.
6. **Contacts.**
 - a. **Press release in Decorahnews.com and Decorah Public Opinion in praise of Court Street and Locust Road Cave preservation.** Mark M. noted both news outlets printed his article (see text attached to minutes - Secretary).
 - b. **Constance Johnson ca. Altfillisch project.** Constance is supposed to be writing a book about Charles Altfillisch. Mark M. contacted her about the DHPC Altfillisch project and is awaiting a response.
 - c. **Carla Brown.** Carla called Mark M. about the Decorah Public Library's building status -- library personnel are considering rehabilitating windows next and wondered if the building would qualify for preservation funds for the work. Mark explained that DHPC's effort to add the library to the Broadway-Phelps Park Historic District is ongoing but incomplete, so the building would not be eligible at this time. He told Carla he would try to start work on the district addition again.
7. **701 Maple Ave. update.** Mark M. reported that the city did purchase this home and that Chad Bird does not think it can be preserved. There will be a salvage option before demolition. Mark did not get to tour the house.
8. **Grant possibilities.**
 - a. **Catalyst Grants.** Mark B. talked to Chad Bird about how appropriate the Haymarket, Copyland, the Ingvoldstad building and David Wadsworth's depot were for Catalyst Grants. Chad thought the Haymarket was probably the most

likely candidate. Chad had two suggestions of his own -- both buildings owned by Jim Juve -- but Jim apparently hesitates to spend money to make improvements, so the two would not be grant contenders. Chad suggested talking to Stephanie Fromm because she has worked with Catalyst Grants. Mark M. called her and she mentioned the Creamery building, East Water Street. Stephanie offered to talk to the people interested in buying the Creamery building about the grant.

9. **Decorah Ordinance Ch. 15 “Design Criteria” Guidelines.** Judy said she has been editing and adding photos to the guidelines, and will meet with Hayley before sharing the draft with other commissioners.
10. **Locust Road Cave research project.** Progress this month: Mark M. received several responses to his post for information on Kevin Lee’s county history website; Diane contacted Evelyn and Phil Halse but learned little from them; Adrienne wrote to Daryl Bolson’s widow but hasn’t heard back from her; Mark M. summarized the information DHPC has in a form that could be used on a sign. In January, *Diane will contact Belva Smith; Hayley will get a photograph of the Last Chance Tavern sign.*
11. **Charles Altfillisch project and brochure content.** Hayley is researching Luther College’s sustainability center at 629 Center Street and Mark M. is working on the architect’s “3rd tier” buildings and also the Methodist Church educational building. In general, Mark thinks we can add as much information as we have about a building to the Altfillisch web document. He encouraged commissioners to research any building on the brochure list that they find interesting.
12. **CLG 2020 Annual report due March 1, 2021.** *Mark M. will write a draft and give commissioners a chance to comment on it.*
13. **Commissioner Reports.** Adrienne drew attention to the fact that David Wadsworth has rehabilitated a door and two windows in his business building, an old depot. David told Mark M. he wants to level and stabilize the foundation before rehabilitating other parts.
14. **Public Comment.** Janelle suggested we talk to Ted Sojka about the Last Chance Tavern; *Diane volunteered to do that.* Janelle invited DHPC members to attend the upcoming WCHPC meeting Saturday, Jan. 9, at 8:30 a.m. in the Annex building.
15. **Possible upcoming meeting, Wednesday, February 3, 2021, 4:00 pm.** Next month’s meeting date and time were noted.
16. **Adjournment.** Mark. M. adjourned the meeting at 5:17 p.m.

TWO CITY PROJECTS WIN RECOGNITION FROM THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Posted: Sun, Dec 13, 2020 2:45 PM

Court Street

The Decorah Historic Preservation Commission is publicly commending the City of Decorah for the recent Court Street rehabilitation project and for the preservation of the Locust Road stone cave.

The Court Street brick paving is part of the National Register of Historic Places' Decorah Commercial Historic District. As part of the project to repair the street, City Engineer Jeremy Brill and City Manager Chad Bird showed the Historic Preservation Commission several drafts of the planned project.

Said Commission member Mark Branum, "Every day I walk by Court Street and notice how beautiful are both the design and the execution. The work models the kind of care that we hope for with all the properties in the Commercial Historic District."

The City of Decorah also won praise for taking special care to preserve the human-made stone cave on Locust Road during that street project. "A less historically-minded community might easily have erased this physical reminder of Decorah's past," said Commission member Adrienne Coffeen.

The removal of vegetation and debris has made the cave more visible and has generated new curiosity about the cave's history. The DHPC is making a new attempt to research the cave's origins and uses, and would appreciate receiving relevant anecdotes, documentation and photographs. Information can be sent to DHPC chair Mark Z. Muggli (mugglimz@luther.edu; 612-720-5795).