

Decorah Historic Preservation Commission
Minutes of October 14, 2019 Meeting (FINAL)

1. **Roll call.** Meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. Present were Mark Muggli, chair, Adrienne Coffeen, Hayley Jackson, Steve Kelsay, Lois Humpal and Judy van der Linden. Diane Scholl was absent. Decorah resident Janelle Pavlovec was also present.
2. **Review and approval of Minutes from September 5, 2019, distributed by Commission secretary Judy van der Linden.** MOTION -- Mark made and Hayley seconded a motion to approve the minutes as written. Motion passed.
3. **Historic Preservation Workshop, Independence, Iowa, October 26, 2019 -- registration & carpooling.** Mark, Adrienne, Steve and Judy will attend. *Mark will fill out registration forms and send in checks; Steve will drive. All will meet at city hall parking lot at 7 a.m.*
4. **DHPC agenda setting.** Mark reviewed current commission projects in order to set priorities.
 - a. **Continue Decorah Commercial Historic District projects.**
 - b. **Monitor Luther College Campus Historic District.** Jan Full continues this work.
 - c. **Organizing and preserving SHPO records, including Site Inventories (SI).** Chad suggested we put these records in the city's Dropbox account, and that is underway. The city of Decorah SI's will also be on the DHPC website pages. *Judy will make a copy of the Montgomery mansion SI at Decorah Genealogy Association.* It was one of the SI's missing from the state files. Adrienne reported Vesterheim has SI's for the blacksmith shop and the razed power building on South Mill St., and *she will obtain both of those.*
 - d. **Altfillisch project on-going, but not first priority -- much room for individual research.** Hayley reported final paperwork for Altfillisch donations from Susie Tone's family is signed and Hayley's student workers have processed most of the collection. Mark asked if he might select specific buildings for research by commissioners, and members agreed.
 - e. **Expanding Broadway-Phelps Park Historic District -- on hold until Chair and Secretary have more time available.** Mark noted the Parks/Recreation department announced completion of Phelps Park wall repairs and Dunning Springs bridge and stonework. He suggested writing a letter to the editor commending them for the work. Commissioners agreed. *Mark will draft the letter.* Mark also reported First Lutheran Church is exploring how best to repair the sanctuary. MOTION -- Steve made and Lois seconded a motion that DHPC send a letter to the church council and building committee encouraging them to preserve the building as much as possible in a historically sensitive way. Motion passed.
 - f. **Wikipedia project -- on hold.**
5. **Decorah Commercial Historic District**
 - a. **Revision of Decorah ordinances Chapter 15 "Design Criteria" and permitting process for C-R zoning district.** Mark, Steve and representatives of

the Board of Adjustment and Planning & Zoning will meet this Wednesday to discuss changes to the design criteria and where DHPC might fit into the review process. Mark noted that any eventual changes in ordinances related to DHPC will have to go to SHPO for review. Steve asked about the status of our sign design review guidelines. *Mark and Steve will mention the guidelines document at Wednesday's meeting and Steve will bring copies to hand out to those attending.*

- b. Main Street downtown survey, April 14-16; follow-up contact with Stephanie Fromm.** An unknown donor has paid for the survey. Mark talked to Stephanie Fromm, executive director of Winneshiek County Development Inc., who said her organization did not make the payment. Commissioners agreed the city government or mayor should lead the survey process. *Mark will talk to Chad Bird about the situation.*
- c. DCHD signage update.** Mark reported the Street Committee isn't ready yet to consider our proposed signs for the district. He noted Waverly chose signs for their three districts similar to the B-PP historic district signage.
- d. Downtown Walking Tour.** DHPC members still want to do this and want to write an original script, Mark noted. Options include creating a single tour touching on 7-8 buildings between the old depot and Vesterheim, or two tours, one of East Water and Washington streets and the other of West Water and Winnebago streets. The project is on hold for now.
- e. Follow-up contact with Viking Bank.** Mark noticed the barrier wall that DHPC had encouraged Viking Bank to construct between its parking and new building is not there. Rick Burras said he'd forgotten about it. Mark resent the document and emails about the wall to bank officials and expressed disappointment to DHPC members that there often isn't follow-up on promised construction details.
- f. C-3 building renovations.**
 - i. Contact with building owners: NRHP files and photos, tax credits, design criteria, etc.** Adrienne and Judy commented on Mark's draft tax credit document, written to help building owners considering renovations. *He'll incorporate their suggestions and also check the location of needed forms.*
 - ii. 128 W. Water St. (Relf Building); exterior renovation?** Judy contacted Marla Klocke, who is consulting on 3rd floor window replacements and interior renovations that probably won't begin until next spring. Judy supplied her with historic photos and a building history from our NRHP files and a version of Mark's tax credit document.
 - iii. 207 E. Water St. (Gust. Haugen Building); window replacements.** Mark spoke with new building owner Laurie Meinholz about the windows, which she'll replace over time. She wants to expand front windows to full size when the time comes.
 - iv. 302 Washington St. (Ingvolstad Lumber); "building exterior renovation" [not within NRHP district].** Mark reported that a building the property owner talked about moving at the last P&Z meeting has instead been mostly demolished. DHPC members don't think there has been a permit granted for demo-

lition. *Mark will attend tonight's P&Z meeting to learn about and perhaps comment on the demolition and to ask the intended use of the buildings.*

v. **222 E. Water St. (currently Brock Tattoos); "building exterior renovation."** Owners will repaint the orange portion of the facade a blue color.

vi. **106 Washington (side storefront of 101 E. Water St. "Sampson Building"); "building sign."** A new blade sign is proposed. Mark thought the design looked good.

6. **Hobby House/Agriculture/4-H Building at Fairgrounds.** Mark reported that all fairground buildings are apparently owned by Decorah Agriculture Assn., not the county. Steve Johnson met with members of DAA, who first said they didn't want the building but would allow it to be moved. Now DAA is reconsidering and may keep the building. MOTION -- Judy made and Adrienne seconded a motion to continue to let Steve Johnson pursue the matter, with DHPC still willing to help if needed. Motion passed.
7. **NRHP nominations, survey reports and site inventories newly available from SHPO -- complete records on City Dropbox files; selected files on DHPC website; complete records on WCHPC website; issue of "missing" site inventories.** See discussion above at 4c.
8. **Luther College NRHP Ashmore-Jewell Barn follow-up.** Mark and Hans Peter Jorgensen met with LC Vice President for Finance and Administration Eric Runestad to discuss uses for the barn. Hans Peter gave a copy of his book about the barn restoration to LC President Jennifer Ward with a note about their meeting with Eric.
9. **Alliance Review (National Alliance of Preservation Commissions), Summer 2019 issue.** Mark suggested members think about the best way to present Altfillisch information in a tour format. Possibilities are StoryMaps and Google maps. Judy said there is also PocketSights. *Hayley will do some research/experimenting with StoryMaps.* Commissioners will discuss more of the *Alliance Review's* articles at another meeting.
10. **Commissioner Reports.** Adrienne said the topic of saving brick streets was discussed at a Decorah Questers Dayspring Chapter meeting she attended. Questers members went on the record to support the city's effort to preserve and restore the 2-block brick surface on Court Street. *Adrienne will contact the Questers to be sure copies of their motion are sent to Jeremy Bril, Ross Hadley, Chad Bird and Kevin Nelson.* Judy asked if DHPC wants an official policy for use of and/or removal of materials stored in our file cabinet at the public library. Members will consider this at another meeting.
11. **Public Comment.** Janelle suggested Laurie Meinholz might want to talk to her cousin's wife, Beth Haugen, about the Haugen building. She urged commissioners to be informed voters at the city council election in November, and to encourage friends to write letters to the editor about the historic downtown. She reminded members of a Sons of Norway meeting Tuesday night.
12. **Possible upcoming meeting: Monday, November 11, 2019, at 4:30 p.m.** There were no objections to this meeting date.
13. **Adjournment.** Meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.