

Decorah Historic Preservation Commission
September 8, 2020 Meeting Minutes (FINAL)

1. **Roll Call.** Chair Mark Muggli called the meeting to order at 2 p.m. Commissioners present were Adrienne Coffeen, Hayley Jackson, Diane Scholl and Judy van der Linden. Steve Kelsay was absent. Also present were Decorah resident Kevin Lee, Andrew Bailey, Luther College Associate VP for Finance and Lorraine Borowski, Decorah mayor.
2. **Review and approval of August 4, 2020 minutes. *Distributed by DHPC secretary Judy van der Linden.*** Adrienne noted that the name Jon Pankow in item #7 should be changed to Jon Romelton. Mark declared the minutes approved with that change.
3. **Review and approval of Luther College Campus Historic District NRHP nomination.** Mark reviewed the history of the college nomination process. Mayor Borowski praised DHPC for its work and follow-through on this application. After brief discussion, commissioners voted unanimously to support the nomination.
4. **C-3 Design Permit applications.**
 - a. **207 Washington St., The Clay Studio, exterior mortar, brick, and window sills.** Mark wrote the proposed recommendation for this application. Adrienne recalled the owners wanted old photos of the building. Mark said it would be good for DHPC to try to find some. Members voted to endorse Mark's recommendation as written.
 - b. **107 W. Broadway St. mural, continued discussion.** Mark noted the ArtHaus mural looks different than proposed, partly because the background is dark blue instead of white. Several commissioners expressed concern that historic building owners will request murals. Kevin Lee said certain paints applied to brick can damage it. *Judy and Diane offered to talk to Shannon Durbin, ArtHaus director, to express the commission's concerns. Adrienne will write to Ed Sauter in Mt. Vernon about that city's treatment of murals. Hayley will look up the Dubuque mural ordinance language.*
5. **Decorah Ch. 15 "Design Criteria" and permitting process for C-3 zoning district.**
 - a. **Ordinance language change update.** Mark reported that Chad Bird went ahead and made many of Paula Mohr's suggested changes to the language. Chad did not include her proposed change regarding windows, so DHPC will need to be vigilant about permits involving those.
 - b. **Design Guidelines update.** Hayley and Judy reported no progress. Mark said the guidelines were mentioned twice at a recent meeting about Vesterheim. He suggested other commissioners may want to help with the guidelines project.
 - c. **Presentation to WCHPC.** David Wadsworth was excited about the changes to Chapter 15 language and wanted Mark or Steve to talk to WCHPC about it.
6. **Contacts.**
 - a. **Vesterheim Zoom meeting with architects.** Mark was invited to a meeting with Vesterheim architects, who were nervous about the recently published changed wording of Chap. 15 "Design Criteria" code. Mark tried to reassure them that most of the Chap. 15 code was not inherently changed. They also asked when the DHPC guidelines would be finished. Mark was surprised that Chad Bird said

there was no decision yet on whether the guidelines would be codified. Commissioners agreed their intent was NOT to enter the guidelines into the city code. *Mark will contact Chad to make that clear.* (NOTE: Chad on Sept. 9 clarified that DHPC design guidelines should only be advisory in nature, at least in the beginning.)

- b. Laurie Meinholz ca. Rehabilitation and tax credits for 209 E. Water St.** Laurie asked Mark about tax credits because she's decided to convert her building's former dance hall to four apartments. He said she does want to retain original window openings and appropriate windows on the building's Water Street side.
 - c. Jean Parker, Saskatchewan, concerning great grandmother's historic photographs.** Jean contacted Mark to learn if DHPC could help her identify persons in her ancestor's photos of Decorah. Mark offered to look at the photos, but told her DGA or WCHS may be of more help in identifications.
- 7. Decorah railroad history opportunity.** Scott Johanningmeier told Steve he would donate the track on the former Ingvaldstad Lumber Company property if volunteers would dig it up and fill in any holes. *Adrienne will continue trying to contact railroad buffs about the project.*
- 8. Preservation of historic properties through Airbnb (see https://www.airbnb.com/rooms/35005051?location=Wykkoff%2C%20MN%2C%20USA&check_in=2020-09-30&check_out=2020-10-01&source_impression_id=p3_1597671876_EVqXF25t%2BCG8B2cJ)** David Wadsworth brought this website to Mark's attention and thinks it offers a possible model for preservation.
- 9. Federal Standards for preservation on Decorah website.** Mark reported that the city has added these standards to its website under "Resources."
- 10. Charles Altfillisch progress report and brochure content.** Mark said Lois will donate her Germann house blueprints (likely to Luther College) if she can have a copy of them. Judy said she added Decorah municipal building information to the brochure content.
 - a. 511 W. Water St., bowling alley.** Adrienne identified this as an Altfillisch building. *She will add information about it to the brochure.*
- 11. Commissioner Reports.** Judy said she asked Lois Humpal about possibly moving the home at 713 Heivly St. so it won't be torn down. Mark reported that Mark Branum will join the commission as a new member after he's approved by city council.
- 12. Public Comment.** Andrew Bailey thanked the commission for its work on the Luther College historic district nomination. Kevin Lee said he appreciated the commission's many accomplishments under the leadership of Mark Muggli.
- 13. Possible upcoming meeting, Tuesday, October 6, 2020, 4:30 pm.** Mark proposed we begin meeting on Wednesdays at 4 p.m. to accommodate Mark Branum's schedule. Next meeting, then, will be Wednesday, Oct. 7, 2020, at 4 p.m. Place was not determined.
- 14. Adjournment.** Meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

September 8, 2020

TO: Decorah Planning and Zoning Commission & City Council
FROM: Decorah Historic Preservation Commission
(Contact: mugglimz@luther.edu; 612-720-5795)
TOPIC: 207 Washington St. C-3 Design Permit for Exterior Work

I. The Property

207 Washington St., currently occupied on the ground floor by the Clay Studio, falls within the C-3 district but not within any designated historic district. It is, however, less than one half block south of the Decorah Commercial Historic District. In itself it is important as a nineteenth century unpainted brick building that retains a good deal of its original brick decorative trim and window openings.

II. The Proposed C-3 Design Plan

The Branums propose repointing the mortar and repairing and replacing broken bricks and limestone window sills.

III. DHPC Recommendation

The Branum design plan is thorough and it matches the Chapter 15.04.050 preferred treatment for an historic property: “to retain, preserve, and repair.” Although Chapter 15 does not directly address the issue of appropriate mortars for different historic masonry types (some modern hard mortars create spalling on older bricks and stone), Mark Branum in a conversation said that he had consulted with local mason Ted Wilson on different mortars and that the contracted mason is using mortar that he believes is appropriate for the 207 Washington St. building.

At its September 8 meeting, the DHPC voted 5 to 0 to endorse Mark and Rachelle Branum’s C-3 Commercial Design Plan and commended them for their careful attention to preserving a notable Decorah historic property.

**CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT
NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION
EVALUATION REPORT FORM**

As a participant in the Certified Local Government Program (CLG), the Historic Preservation Commission is required to review and comment on proposed National Register nominations of properties within its jurisdiction. The State is required to provide the CLG with a 60-day period for the review prior to a State Nominations Review Committee (SNRC) meeting. This form must be received by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) five days in advance of the State Nomination Review Committee (SNRC) meeting.

(Please print clearly)

Historic Property Name: Luther College Campus Historic District
 Address: 700 College Drive - Decorah, IA 52101
 Certified Local Government Name: Decorah Historic Preservation Commission
 Date of public meeting for nomination review: Tuesday, Sept 8, 2020

Applicable Criteria: (Please Check the Appropriate Box)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Criterion A (Historical Events) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Criterion C (Architecture) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Criterion B (Important Person) | <input type="checkbox"/> Criterion D (Archaeological) |

Please check the following box that is appropriate to the nomination (Please print clearly).

- The Commission recommends that the property should be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- The Commission recommends that the property should not be listed in the National Register for the following reasons: _____
- The Commission chooses not to make a recommendation on this nomination for the following reasons: _____
- The Commission would like to make the following recommendations regarding the nomination: (use additional sheets if necessary): _____

Official Signatures Required Below

Historic Review Board Chair or Representative

Print Name: Mark Z. Muegli Approved Not Approved

Signature: Mark Z. Muegli

Chief Elected Official

Print Name: Lorraine Borowski Approved Not Approved

Signature: Lorraine Borowski

Professional Evaluation

Print Name: _____ Approved Not Approved

Signature: _____