

Decorah Historic Preservation Commission
Minutes of the March 3, 2021 Meeting (FINAL)

1. **Roll Call.** Mark Muggli, Chairperson, called the electronic meeting to order at 4:00 pm. Present were commissioners Mark Branum (= Mark B.), Adrienne Coffeen, Hayley Jackson, Steve Kelsay, Diane Scholl and Judy van der Linden. Also present were Decorah resident Janelle Pavlovec, City Manager Chad Bird and City Code Compliance officer Greg Swanson.
2. **Review and approval of February 3, 2021 minutes. *Distributed by DHPC secretary Judy van der Linden.*** The chair declared the minutes approved as written.
3. **Murals in Historic District -- City Manager Report.** Chad reported that Planning & Zoning members did not respond to DHPC's suggestion that a task force be formed to develop ordinance language about murals. Murals are not mentioned in city code, but Chad said he has always insisted P&Z have a public conversation about any proposed mural. He suggested DHPC send P&Z an executive summary explaining its concerns. MOTION -- Steve moved, Judy seconded a motion that DHPC submit an executive summary to P&Z raising the commission's concerns and suggesting a task force develop ordinance language about murals. Steve commented that the ordinance should be limited to murals proposed in the C-3 district. *Steve and Mark B. will work on the executive summary; Diane will help by conferring and editing.* Motion passed 7-0.
4. **Discussion with new Decorah Code Compliance officer, Greg Swanson.** Greg is visiting with city commissions and meeting with contractors and will begin building inspections and permit reviews at the end of April. All C-3 permits will go through him. Mark described DHPC's role in C-3 design permit review and asked Greg to keep the commission in mind when any historic property comes up for construction review.
5. **DHPC Annual Historic Preservation Award for "a significant contribution to the identification, study, or preservation of Decorah's historic built environment."** Commissioners discussed candidates for the award, including Lois and Dean Humpal, Winneshiek County Historical Society (the Landers-Adams-Bodensteiner home), and city engineer Jeremy Brill -- all suggested since DHPC's February meeting. MOTION -- Diane made a motion that DHPC offer awards to both WCHS and Jeremy Brill, and that if either declined, that award would go to Dean and Lois Humpal. Steve seconded the motion; it was unanimously approved.
6. **Ingvoldstad Lumber trackage.** Mark reported that four new volunteers contacted him in response to a recent newspaper article about this project (see updated list of contacts attached to these minutes). He's encouraged about the response and suggested the project might be part of the East Main pocket park just officially approved by the city. As a next step, Mark and Steve will ask to meet with city engineer Jeremy Brill.
7. **Contacts.**
 - a. **Presentation of required annual CLG report to City Council.** Mark made this presentation on Feb. 15.
 - b. **Carol Hasvold concerning DAR nomination of Court St. and Locust Road Cave.** Mark and Carol talked several times since she first contacted him in early February. Her local DAR wanted to nominate the city's Court Street repair and

cave projects for a national preservation competition. However, she learned the city is not eligible for the national award, so her group plans to give the city a local award for the two projects.

- 8. Decorah Ordinance Ch. 15 “Design Criteria” Guidelines.** Judy reported that she and Hayley have completed the guidelines except for several permissions for photos. She hopes both the design guidelines and DHPC’s earlier sign guidelines documents can be forwarded to the city manager, P&Z and city council for review and approval. *Steve will send Judy his latest version of the sign guidelines, and Judy will contact Chad Bird if further updates were made.*
- 9. Luther College Campus Historic District.** Mark said the district has not yet been officially posted.
- 10. Locust Road Cave research project.** No additional information has emerged about the cave, so Mark suggested it was time to move forward with the sign. *Mark and Steve will ask Jeremy Bril about sign placement and safety issues when they meet with him about the Ingvaldstad Lumber trackage.*
- 11. Charles Altfillisch project updates.** As DHPC’s list of Altfillisch properties grows, Mark said he believes commissioners should feel comfortable including all properties that came out of the Altfillisch architecture firm, even when unsure which architect did the majority of the design.
- 12. Commissioner Reports.** Commissioners took this time to discuss the recent design permit application by Hacker Nelson to alter the facade of 121 W. Water so that it matches that of 123 W. Water. Mark and Judy each wrote different draft DHPC responses to the proposed project. Mark learned when speaking with Ryan Bullerman of HN that they have hired a contractor, Darold Berger Masonry Inc., but have not consulted an architect. Ryan said they considered restoring 121’s original facade but decided they really want it to mimic their main building. Adrienne stated she hoped the stone walls on either side of 121’s entrance and a plaque mounted near the door would be preserved. Mark B. said it sets a precedent to give HN the okay to mimic 123’s facade. In a straw poll, commissioners voted to urge HN to preserve what remains of the original facade and rebuild what was removed during a 1920’s remodel -- using available photographs and drawings -- thus returning the facade as close to 1866 as possible. *Mark will work on a new response, including building images, and send it to commissioners for their comments. He will also write an agenda for a DHPC meeting for Friday, March 5 at 11 am when commissioners will formally vote on the response. Steve suggested HN receive a copy of the response right away so they can consider it before the P&Z meeting.*
- 13. Public Comment.** This agenda item was skipped.
- 14. Possible upcoming meeting, Wednesday, April 7, 2021, 4:00 pm.**
- 15. Adjournment.** The chair adjourned the meeting at 6:02 pm.