

**Decorah Sustainability Commission**  
**City Council Chambers / Zoom meeting**  
Wednesday, September 15, 2021, 5:00 - 6:15 pm

Members present (Zoom call): Michelle Barness, Ben Grimstad, Jeremy Leitz, Jim Martin-Schramm, Molly McNicoll, Ann Mansfield

Others: Emily Neal, Jacob

**AGENDA**

1. Call to order
  - Meeting called to order by Jim Martin-Schramm at 5:02 pm.
2. Approval of Minutes for August meeting.
  - August 18, 2021 minutes reviewed and approved (Motion by B. Grimstad, seconded by M. McNicoll)
3. Sustainability Commission Press Releases and Web Links
  - Jim sent 2 press releases to DSC for review, then sent to Wanda for forward to media outlets; Decorah Newspapers and decorahnews.com. Wanda has sent twice; have not seen published. Emily will follow up with Wanda re getting the releases accepted by the paper, etc.
  - Jim has asked Chopper to fix the link to connect to press releases, etc.
  - Work in progress re improving communication; will continue to work on it with new city manager, etc. We look forward to having the new manager join us for our October meeting.
4. Pilot/Review Iowa Sustainable Cities Program during 2021-22
  - Modeled after Minnesota's Green Step Cities Program 21,
    - For 2021, Jim has been invited to be a part of a regional group focused on sustainability. Contact from Great Plains Institute think tank – helped Minnesota and other states develop the Green Steps program. UNI's Center for Energy and Environmental Education is providing some staffing for the Iowa Sustainable Cities program for the next year (August 2021-July 2022).
    - Look at 5 areas in MN Green Step Cities program – some alignment/overlap with our DSC plan
      - 29 Best practices – Reviewed, clarify, simplify and determine what makes sense for communities in Iowa
      - Looking for: Cities/communities willing to “test drive” some of the best practices and provide feedback. Potential benefits: 1) Participate in the process 2) Gain good ideas for our work/future planning
      - Initial feedback today –
        - Could be very helpful/instructive as we develop the DSC.
        - Could be a great framework for us to work with; helpful with our goal setting, etc.
        - Decorah has some good experience, can provide helpful feedback for some of the action items.

- Positive to be a part of a community/shared interest in sustainability
- Worth our time over the next 12 months to be a part of this effort

4. Update on AW.4 ACTION: Increase monthly stormwater utility fee with the help of a consultant to use service unit approach (a unit fee for impact that serves as a baseline).
- Molly and Michelle: take a look at existing stormwater fee- shift from flat rate structure to service unit approach fee. Fees increase for properties with impervious surfaces. Benefits of fee change: more funding to invest in best practices and to develop a cost share program to implement best practices. Luther class did a study re. service unit fees; Michelle and Molly working with the city to determine new fee structure – to provide incentives for best practice.
  - Molly and Michelle proposing a blended fee structure
  - Currently getting feedback from city engineer for properties around town
  - For October meeting, bring a draft proposal
  - Future public meetings – flooding and storm water management, storm water utility, storm water cost share
  - Discussion re how to present the cost analysis of fee changes for upcoming meetings as well as be thinking of other like-community examples to compare to/learn from.

6. Date, focus, and facilitator of next quarterly meeting with city leaders

- See attached "Decorah 2030" document distributed with agenda for the September 15 meeting
- Jim and Mayor Borowski discussed this. Purpose: Opportunity for new City Manager to meet city leaders and learn about goals/strategic priorities as well as barriers
- Proposed: Thursday Oct. 28<sup>th</sup> 5-6:30 pm via Zoom.
- Consider for meeting
  - 1 pager – organizational summary, what strategic priorities, what are challenges/barriers?
  - (Come prepared) Ask people their vision for Decorah – opening for collaboration in the future
  - How do we help each other?
  - Communication, what do leaders want?
- Commission discussion:
  - Prefer in-person meeting, two hours in duration
  - Keep one-page summary of strategic priorities and barriers
  - Focus discussion on:
    - What is their vision for Decorah?
    - How can we help each other achieve our mission?
    - What would community leaders like to gain from these quarterly meetings

7. POSTPONE for future meetings as time permits:

Review and prioritization of action items in Sustainability Plan:

- Energy

- Economic Development
- Communications and Outreach

#### 9. Adjourn

- Meeting adjourned at 6:16 pm. Motion by B. Grimstad, seconded by M. McNicoll
- Next meeting is Oct. 20 via Zoom
- Minutes submitted by Ann Mansfield

City of Decorah Solar Site Summary

Address	Account #	Meter #	Size of Solar KW AC	Yearly Kwh	Current Bill	Current \$/kwh	Solar Production	Cost From Solar	Purchased from Grid	Cost from Grid	Total Estimated Savings
108 Railroad Ave	7665111000	502008883	22.8	29,085	\$4,397.83	\$0.151	29970	\$3,296.70	-885	-\$560.76	\$1,560.36
Main Campground	3444111000	500116009	90	156,560	\$22,576.14	\$0.144	162,975	\$19,555.76	-6,413	-\$3,059.34	\$16,772.22
Twin Springs	3444111000	500116004	45	77,973	\$11,650.00	\$0.149	79,380	\$9,525.60	-1,407	-\$231.86	\$1,155.66
400 Claiborne Dr	7665111000	500116001	0	224,580	\$30,939.64	\$0.138	0	\$0.00	224,580	\$0.00	\$0.00
210 Neivly St	7665111000	502033053	0	16,641	\$2,861.10	\$0.172	0	\$0.00	16,641	\$0.00	\$0.00
800 W Water St	7665111000	502033053	0	217,500	\$30,139.63	\$0.139	0	\$0.00	217,500	\$0.00	\$0.00
404 Grand Island Dr	7665111000	502008554	0	7,449	\$630.29	\$0.085	0	\$0.00	7,449	\$0.00	\$0.00
1766 Old Stage Rd	7665111000	502004991	0	1,474,200	\$121,905.22	\$0.083	0	\$0.00	1,474,200	\$0.00	\$0.00
1755 Old Stage Rd	7665111000	500138518	0	23,819	\$3,834.50	\$0.161	0	\$0.00	23,819	\$0.00	\$0.00
			157.8	2,227,807	\$228,934.35	\$0.103	272,323	\$32,379.06	1,955,484	-\$3,851.96	\$10,098.37

# Perry Novak ELECTRIC



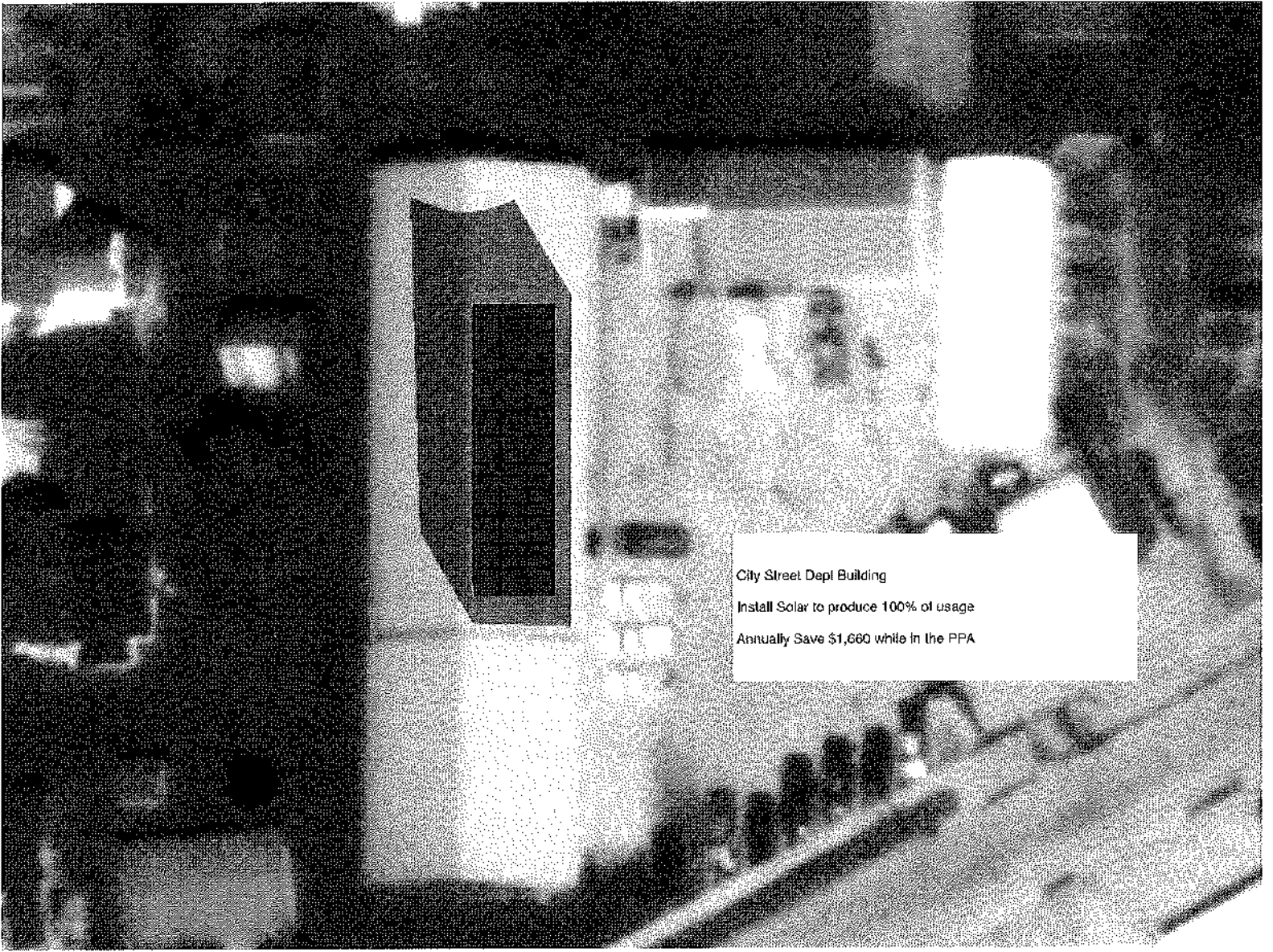
YOUR ENERGY SOLUTIONS PARTNER

- \*\* 450w BiFacial Panels
- \*\* 30 year warranty on panels

Perry Novak Electric would assist with:

- \* Securing any grants available
- \* Help find a "friend of the industry" investor to work with the city
- \* Bring years of experience of working with Cities, Counties, Schools, and other entities to work with investors on PPA's

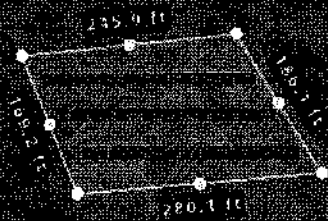
John Nielsen  
Vice President  
Sales /  
Operations  
563-379-4754  
john@pne.us



City Street Dept Building

Install Solar to produce 100% of usage

Annually Save \$1,660 while in the PPA



City of Decorah Campground  
Two Meters Main Campground and Twin Springs side  
Both side to produce 100% of annual kwh need  
Approx. \$8,400 annual savings while in the PPA

**Update on T.5 ACTION: Evaluate speed limits in town and consider speed reductions in areas where appropriate, especially at dangerous streets/intersections.**

**Transportation Goal Connections:**

- Increasing the amount of walking and biking in Decorah
- Increasing accessibility of our community

**Type of Action: Policy Change**

- The Decorah City Code currently adopts by reference the State of Iowa speed limits. This transportation action will look at options for reducing speed limits in Decorah below the current state limits, which would need to be reflected in city code.
- A reduction in speed limits can be done in certain zones (parks, cemeteries, school zones, etc.) or citywide (all residential neighborhoods now have a lowered speed limit).

**Partners: Public Safety (Police Chief) and City Engineer, UERPC Regional Transportation Planner**

**Update on action:**

- **Meeting with Decorah Police Chief and Engineer, and Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission (UERPC) Senior Transportation Planner**
  - Meeting held w/partners to understand city's current policies or practices around changing speed limits
  - There isn't a formal process for assessing speed limits at this time, but nonetheless there are instances of the city reducing speed limits when city staff raised concerns
  - Speed limits in town are currently mostly 25 mph
  - There are a few specific locations in town that have come onto city staff's radar as having potential for reduced speeds, but these aren't many
  - There are also areas in town where public safety has a strong presence to discourage speeding, and this has been successful (as opposed to policy changes to reduce speeds)
  - UERPC Senior Transportation Planner shared examples of communities that have decided to lower speeds across the board to improve pedestrian/bicycle safety, and access for all users
  - Police Chief, City Engineer and UERPC Transportation Planner recommended discussing the idea of lowering speed limits across the board in Decorah with the DSC, to receive feedback on the intent of T5 and whether this would be an appropriate move to fulfill the action. Transportation Planner to provide discussion points/background at meeting.

**Next Steps:**

- DSC provides feedback on across the board speed limit reductions
- Meet again with Police Chief, Engineer and Transportation Planner to identify specific steps for moving ahead on citywide speed reduction (if that is the guidance), or to go back to drawing board on how to tackle action if different approach is recommended
- Draft code amendment for speed reduction for P&Z (?) and council review/approval if needed