

Decorah Historic Preservation Commission
August 25, 2021 Meeting Minutes (FINAL)

1. **Roll Call.** Chair Mark Muggli called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Present were commissioners Mark Branum, Adrienne Coffeen, Hayley Jackson, Diane Scholl and Judy van der Linden. Steve Kelsay has resigned from DHPC and was absent. Also present were Decorah Mayor Lorraine Borowski, Friends of the Library President Karla Brown, Planning and Zoning Commissioner Joel Zook and Decorah resident Janelle Pavlovec.
2. **Review and approval of July 26, 2021 minutes. *Distributed by DHPC secretary Judy van der Linden.*** Mark declared the minutes adopted as written.
3. **Broadway-Phelps Park Historic District Boundary increase (formal ratification).** Mark reviewed the reasoning behind expanding the district and described the process of writing the nomination. Two properties -- Decorah's Public Library and St. Benedict's Church -- would be added to the district. Mark said commissioners today must decide if the proposed district expansion is reasonable and, if so, ratify it. He would like to mail the ratified nomination to the state by Oct. 1. At this point Mark opened the public meeting and invited comments. Mayor Borowski asked if National Register designation for a building meant that only limited changes could be made to it. Mark emphasized that National Register status puts no such limitations on a building owner. He said that although being on the register carries weight, it is strictly honorific. The mayor encouraged Mark to make this clear to the library Board of Trustees when he speaks to them on Sept. 13. FOL president Brown said her group had similar concerns. There were no other speakers, so the public meeting about the proposed expansion was closed. DHPC members voted 6-0 to ratify the nomination to enlarge the BPPHD by adding the two properties.
4. **C-3 District Mural Guidelines.** P&Z members at their August meeting discussed DHPC's Mural Guidelines and expressed concern about some of the language. To address those concerns, Mark rewrote parts of the document. However tonight, Joel and some commissioners said they feel the guidelines language needs additional work. *Mark B. will try to revise portions with input from Joel.*
5. **Courthouse furniture discussion.** Mark reported that courthouse officials have been wanting to move four large tables out of the building, one of which was apparently original to the 1904 structure. Officials at one point said the furniture would be auctioned off if it couldn't be relocated soon. Sheriff Dan Marx has since found new homes for three tables. Mark encouraged anyone with ideas for the fourth to contact the county.
6. **Charles Altfillisch project.**
 - a. **Altfillisch firm Project Book.** Mark reported that a long-sought, comprehensive Project Book for the Charles Altfillisch firm has been found. It was located in one of five boxes of architect Don Gray's papers at the Winneshiek County Historical Society. Projects from 1921 through 1996 are listed. Hayley has photographed the book and will determine how best to share parts of it. Mark said this find may delay completion of DHPC's Altfillisch project, but it also will make it more complete.

- b. Web content.** Mark said he didn't end up applying for hotel-motel tax funding to produce an Altfillisch brochure. He reported that Jon Pankow now thinks putting DHPC's Altfillisch research into a long Google doc may be a good idea because commissioners could edit it themselves. Jon said he'd ask about uploading a link to the document to the city website. Mark thinks the new city manager may want to weigh in on the project. In the meantime, members will continue research.
- 7. DHPC Membership.** Steve Kelsay has moved out of Decorah, leaving an opening on DHPC. Kevin Klosterboer said he's not interested. *Mark will contact other possibilities, including Karen Tjossem, Wes Knaack and perhaps David Faldet.*
- 8. Commissioner Reports.** Mark said he still plans to talk to the Rotary Club next Wednesday, Sept. 1. His topic will be Charles Altfillisch.
- 9. Public Comment.** Janelle suggested David Faldet might serve on DHPC.
- 10. Possible upcoming meeting, Wednesday, September 29, 2021, 4:00 pm.** Date of the next regularly scheduled meeting was noted.
- 11. Adjournment.** Meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m. by the Chair.