

Decorah Historic Preservation Commission  
Minutes of January 26, 2022 Meeting (FINAL)

1. **Roll Call.** Meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. over Zoom. Present: Mark Muggli, Hayley Jackson, Karen Tjossem, Adrienne Coffeen, Diane Scholl, Judy van der Linden. Mark Branum was absent. Janelle Pavoloc and Paul Scott joined from the public.
2. **Review and approval of Dec. 29, 2021 minutes. *Distributed by DHPC secretary Judy van der Linden.*** Minutes were adopted as presented.
3. **Election of 2022 DHPC officers.** MOTIONS: Diane nominated Mark Muggli as chair, Karen seconded. With no other nominations, Mark closed nominations. Motion passed with one abstention. Diane nominated Hayley Jackson as vice chair. With no other nominations, Mark closed nominations. Motion passed with one abstention. Mark nominated Judy van der Linden as secretary. There were no other nominations. Motion passed with one abstention.
4. **Broadway-Phelps Park HD Boundary Expansion update.** SHPO asked Mark to make several small changes to the expansion nomination. It has now been forwarded to the National Park Service, and DHPC may get a response from NPS by mid-March.
5. **Altfillisch project update.** Mark said the project doesn't seem to be progressing. He has not heard recently from Jessica Rilling about the brochure, nor does Iroc have a draft of the website ready. Jeremy Brill did complete maps for the brochure. Mark does plan to add several photos to the website content while he still can.
6. **2021 draft CLG Report review.** Commissioners read through Mark's draft report before the meeting. MOTION: Mark made a motion to adopt the draft report with changes to correct several small errors. Hayley seconded. Motion passed 6-0.
  - a. **Adopt 2022 Work Plan.** The draft Work Plan for 2022 included lists of four on-going activities, 11 major priorities and one potential other project. Commissioners agreed to keep in the plan the four on-going activities and ten of the eleven priorities, and to add Adrienne's 2024 anniversary project as a priority. Other potential projects involved historic trees, a web page about city architects and engineers, a historic photo repository, the New Deal in Decorah, Fifth Avenue and/or Pleasant Hill Historic Districts and compiling information about A. R. Coffeen. For the priority projects: *Judy will talk with Travis Goedken about both the Locust Road cave sign and the Railroad Avenue Combination Depot building; Mark will ask David Wadsworth about his depot; Mark will ask Elizabeth Lorentzen if she wants to be involved in writing a brochure of the city's NR properties and districts (both Mark and Karen are enthusiastic about this project); Karen will champion an inventory of the city's distinctive buildings; and Adrienne, Hayley and Judy will help with the 2024 anniversary recognition. Adrienne will also ask about copying her sister's postcards and will gather A. R. Coffeen data.* MOTION: Diane moved to adopt the Work Plan with the agreed changes, Mark seconded the motion and commissioners approved it 6-0.
7. **508 W. Water St. (Vesterheim Museum Cary Building) C-3 Permit update.** Mark hopes DHPC will continue to be kept in the loop by Vesterheim about its plans to demolish the Cary Building and construct the new Commons building in its place.

- 8. Decorah Commercial Historic District and Tax Credits.**
  - a. Laurie Meinholz.** Laurie told Mark that the state discouraged her from applying for historic tax credits for remodeling her building at 207 E. Water St. She wants to partition a former indoor ballroom into separate apartments. Mark is disappointed that the tax credit program seems to be designed only for large developers.
  - b. Diane Whealy and Elizabeth Maurus.** Mark said they showed some interest in applying for tax credits for their project.
- 9. City Manager announcement that agendas must be submitted 48 hours prior to public meetings.** Mark noted this new policy.
- 10. Commissioner Reports.** Diane said she's disappointed to learn how difficult it is for small town building owners to qualify for historic tax credits.
- 11. Public Comment.** Janelle has heard that owners of rental properties in Decorah are unhappy with requirements of the city's new building code.
- 12. Upcoming meeting Wednesday, Feb. 23, 2022, 4:30 pm.** Mark hopes commissioners can meet in person, perhaps seated at a distance from each other in council chambers.
- 13. Adjournment.** Meeting was adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

## **DECORAH HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

### **2021 Annual CLG Report: 2022 WORK PLAN**

#### Regular on-going activities, along with by-law duties

1. Historic Preservation Month activities, including naming recipients of our annual Historic Preservation Award.
2. Community education, including continuing development of our website and of other media outlets.
3. Continued refinement of DHPC internal web contents and research file contents.
4. Consultation on individual building projects as they come forward, including responses to individual C-3 rehabilitation, sign, and mural permit applications.

#### Priority Projects

1. "Charles Altfillisch: A Tour of His Decorah Architecture." (In process. We have completed information gathering and expect that the printed brochure and web contents will be available in early 2022. We will then continue to catalog materials as they come forward, in preparation for web updates and a second edition of the brochure.)
2. Locust Road Cave research and signage project. (Research mostly completed; city has asked for a delay in sign production.)
3. Vesterheim Museum long-range planning, especially as it relates to the Decorah Commercial Historic District. (We hope to continue to consult with Vesterheim on its planning; building demolition and new construction permits are proposed for early 2022 consideration.)
4. First Lutheran Church building redesign consultation. (Three DHPC Commissioners are members.)
5. Broadway-Phelps Park Historic District Boundary Extension. (Final nomination stages scheduled for early 2022.)
6. Guided or printed walking tours of Decorah Commercial HD, Luther College Campus HD, and Broadway-Phelps Park HD.
7. Brochure of "Decorah's National Register Properties and Districts."
8. Ingvolstad Lumber Company Track relocation to Dry Run Park. (Currently on hold until City Engineer and property owner complete discussions.)
9. Railroad Avenue Decorah Combination Depot--consideration of ownership and future uses.
10. An informal (web-based?) inventory of distinctive historic Decorah buildings.
11. Preparations for Decorah's 175th Anniversary (2024).

#### Other Potential Projects

1. Continued consideration of using Wikipedia or social media for educational purposes.
2. Decorah buildings associated with local ethnic history.
3. Decorah's Historic Trees--a catalog and walking arboretum.
4. The New Deal in Decorah.
5. An archive of Decorah photographs.

6. A Survey of Decorah's Architects/Engineers (e.g., H. O Ball, W. S. Bucknell, E. Hill Turnock, A. R. Coffeen, A. N. Hanson, Charles Altfillisch).

#### Training/Education

1. We hope as many members as possible will take advantage of the 2022 Preserve Iowa program in Mason City.
2. We will watch for regional workshops and meetings and electronic webinars.
3. All Commission members continue to receive an electronic copy of the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions magazine and newsletter. Follow-up discussions of particular items are one form of commissioner development.