

Decorah Historic Preservation Commission
Minutes of Nov. 30, 2022 Meeting (FINAL)

1. **Roll Call.** Chairperson Mark Muggli called the meeting to order at 4:33 pm. Present were Mark Branum, Kathy Buzza, Adrienne Coffeen, Hayley Jackson, Diane Scholl and Judy van der Linden.
2. **Review and approval of October 26, 2022 minutes (*distributed by secretary Judy van der Linden*).** Judy will correct the vote tally in #6a. Minutes otherwise were approved as written.
3. **Historic Preservation impact of telecommunications tower at 1321 State Highway 9.** DHPC did not file any objections to the presence of this tower. (However, Mark noted that one day a tower may be proposed for an area considered as scenic or historic.)
4. **C-3 District Permit Application Review.**
 - a. **101 W. Water St. alleyway (Impact Coffee; Chamber of Commerce applicant).** Mark wrote the response to this application. Commissioners were pleased the Chamber consulted and followed DHPC's mural guidelines for the project. Permit was approved 7-0.
 - b. **104 E. Water "Signboard."** City zoning administrator Greg Swanson approved a last minute request to cover the former "The Getup" business signboard with composite board. The signboard had visible dried glue on it when "The Getup" sign was removed. There was no formal permit for the work.
 - c. **Contact from Katie Goetz, researcher from Hess, Roise Historical Consultants ca. 105, 107-109 Water St. and 108 Washington St.** Mark was asked by Katie Goetz if he would share the research files for these buildings. He learned that the building owners hope to apply to the state of Iowa for historic tax credits in order to repair and restore the buildings. Katie is mostly interested in photographs, but there were very few in the building files. *Judy volunteered to search for additional photographs after Christmas.* Mark also noted that windows have been installed on the old Armory building, 421 W. Water St.
5. **Charles Altfillisch project.**
 - a. **Celebration follow-up.** Mark reported Mayor Lorraine Borowski was impressed with the Altfillisch brochure, though she couldn't attend the celebration. He heard other compliments about both celebration and brochure.
 - b. **Dale and Sue Goodman (609 W. Broadway).** Goodman's Altfillisch home will turn 100 years old in 2023 and Dale and Sue would like to host an open house/celebration similar to the Altfillisch party. Diane asked if DHPC could use that event to announce the commission's annual Historic Preservation Award. Members were urged to think about that, as well as possible 2023 award nominees.
 - c. **IROC web design.** IROC has completed the Altfillisch web content and will add the brochure to the website as well. Mark sent their bill of \$438 to the city.
 - d. **Web updating, next steps, etc.** In considering how to maintain the web content, Mark learned that IROC just trained Leslie White at city hall. Leslie told Mark she could do the updating, and City Clerk Keri Sand gave permission for Leslie to spend several hours a month working on the DHPC website. Mark said commissioners will need to collect any corrections and text or photos to be added and send them to him. He will assemble them in a Google document for Leslie. He hopes to have an update

ready in January or February.

6. **Decorah Chapter 17.96 C-3 Business Commercial District ordinance changes (parking ramps, etc.).** Mark reported that the City Council approved several small changes to the ordinance language proposed by the Planning and Zoning Commission regarding parking ramps. Council members substituted the phrase “addressed street” (indicating the street on which a building fronts) for a specific street name, and they changed P&Z’s wording to allow either rear or side entrances to parking ramps. They did not increase the maximum number of ramps allowed in the C-3 district. Overall, Mark felt their decisions reflected support for the historic dimensions of the downtown.
7. **Iowa Cultural and Entertainment District update.**
 - a. **Application date: early May 2023.** Mark noted the date falls in May rather than March.
 - b. **Planning Group: DHPC, Chamber, Vesterheim, ArtHaus, Decorah Betterment, Visit Decorah Tourism, Decorah City.**
 - c. **Planning meeting: Tuesday, Nov. 15, 11:00 am, Chamber of Commerce.** Members agreed that the Chamber will write the application. They will hold a Zoom meeting with state officials, then meet again to continue plans in January.
8. **Significant Decorah Properties project.**
 - a. **Project Guidelines and goals.** Mark would like to have the initial spreadsheet of significant properties on the DHPC website by the end of January.
 - b. **List development.** Mark has recently added cemeteries, Wold Park, the Tavener site, some homes from the Buresh thesis, a concrete block home near Phelps Park and the Sears kit home at 720 Washington St. He asked about David Anderson suggested properties, such as sidewalks, carriage houses and barns. Members decided against adding historic sidewalks and feel a major survey of carriage houses and barns will have to wait. Regarding the Egge cabin and other small buildings at Vesterheim, Hayley suggested making one entry – “Heritage Park” – to the spreadsheet, with notes about this collection of museum buildings. Mark wondered if there were other parks that should be added, and asked commissioners to think about that and the overall balance of properties on the spreadsheet. *Diane will talk to Midge Kjome at Decorah Genealogy Association about several properties* (DGA has files on historic homes and cemeteries). Mark thought a sign describing the old mill in Wold Park would be of interest. Adrienne said 210 East St. was the home of brick maker Kornmeyer and might be included on the spreadsheet. Mark said he was inclined to include the Algyer house at 301 Pleasant Hill, a very contemporary house which architect William Lockard built for his family.
9. **Contacts**
 - a. **Kelly Ackford, Nevada youth services librarian.** Kelly contacted DHPC about a website resource discovered by one of her students who was doing home history research. Kelly and her students had used DHPC’s website resources, and Kelly suggested adding the website her student discovered to DHPC’s list of resources. Mark questioned if the city would approve the addition, and said he would check.
10. **Commissioner Reports.** Judy reported that some of the local history reference books formerly available in the public library have been put in storage or given to WCHS.
11. **Public Comment.** There was none.

12. Upcoming meeting: Wednesday, December 28, 2022, 4:30 pm.

13. Adjournment. Meeting was adjourned at 6:00 pm.

November 30, 2022

TO: Decorah Zoning Administrator, P&Z Commission, City Council
FROM: Decorah Historic Preservation Commission <historicpreservation@decorahia.org>
TOPIC: 101 W. Water St. (Impact Coffee; Chamber “Stamp” mural project) Sign/Mural Permit Application

I. The Property

101 W. Water St. is a large, important commercial building that owner Bertha Mott created in 1925 by combining two older buildings under a single new facade. Charles Altfillisch was the architect and A. R. Coffeen was the builder. As is typical for commercial buildings of that era, the rear alleyway elevation is constructed of a less expensive common brick than was used on the facade and side-street elevations. The building is a “contributing” property in the 2017 National Register Decorah Commercial Historic District. The building’s original character was fully revealed during the 2018 restoration undertaken by owner Stan Fullerton and Impact Coffee business owner Sean Brown, a project that earned the DHPC’s 2020 Historic Preservation Award.

II. The Proposal

The Chamber of Commerce is inaugurating an annual Postage Stamp Public Arts mural series. The proposed first mural by local artist Hannah Tulgren would be a ca. 1’ x 2’ floral “stamp” installed on an existing steel panel on the 101 W. Water St. rear alley elevation.

III. DHPC Response

When judged by the city’s mural guidelines, developed by the DHPC with help from P&Z, this mural proposal is ideal:

- It will add vitality to an under-utilized alley location.
- Because of its small size and alley location, the mural will not undermine the building’s architectural integrity.
- Because the mural will be painted on an existing surface-mounted steel plate, it will not compromise the building’s masonry and is completely reversible.
- The application is professionally done and shows full awareness of the technical issues involved in outdoor murals.
- The project has the building owner’s support and understanding.
- The Chamber consulted with DHPC before completing and submitting its proposal.

MOTION: On November 30, 2022, the DHPC voted 7 to 0 to enthusiastically endorse the proposed mural on the rear elevation of 101 W. Water St.