

**MINUTES  
CITY OF AMES  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

Date: April 8, 2019	Peter Hallock, Chairperson	2021
	Ted Grevstad-Nordbrock, Vice-Chair	2022
Call to Order: 6:00 PM	Lisa Hovis	2021
Place: Ames City Hall Council Chambers	*Edith Hunter	2020
	Barry Snell	2020
Adjournment: 7:12PM	Susan Minks	2021
	Megan Klein-Hewitt	2022
	[*Absent]	

CALL TO ORDER: Peter Hallock, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

MOTION: (Snell/Hovis) to approve the Agenda for the meeting of April 8, 2019.

*MOTION PASSED: (6-0)*

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MARCH 11, 2018:**

MOTION: (Minks/Snell) to approve the Minutes of the meeting of March 11, 2018.

*MOTION PASSED: (6-0)*

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PUBLIC FORUM: There were no public comments.

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**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Ted Grevstad-Nordbrock, Vice Chair, nominated Peter Hallock as Chairperson for the 2019-2020 calendar year.

MOTION: (Snell/Hovis) to close nominations and vote in Peter Hallock as Chairperson for the 2019-2020 calendar year.

*MOTION PASSED: (6-0).*

Lisa Hovis nominated Ted Gravstad-Nordbrock for Vice Chair for the 2019-2020 calendar year.

MOTION: (Snell/Hovis) to close nominations and vote in Ted Grevstad-Nordbrock as Vice Chair for the 2019-2020 calendar year.

*MOTION PASSED: (6-0).*

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**DISCUSS THE CITY OF AMES HISTORIC PRESERVATION WEBSITE IN RELATION TO CHAPTER 31 (HISTORIC PRESERVATION) OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE**

Eloise Sahlstrom, Planner, began with a brief overview of the City website the Historic Preservation Commission page. Ms. Sahlstrom showed what current links and documents the current page provides. Ms. Sahlstrom then presented the Dubuque, Iowa Historic Preservation Commission page.

The City of Dubuque's page is similar in comparison. One difference noted was that their webpage for Historic Preservation originates on a page dedicated to all of their city

commissions. Once one goes further in their subpages there are differences in photographs, information, and a 'Contact Us' button that is consistent on all their Historic Preservation subpages.

Mr. Hallock noted how the City's website has a lot of procedural information, but Dubuque's presents the information with more discussion opportunities.

Mr. Grevstad-Nordbrock pointed out to the commission the architecture guidelines link that the city of Dubuque has linked to their website. Ms. Sahlstrom went through the guideline PDF with the commission. If the commission would like an architecture guideline similar to that of Dubuque, it would be a good discussion to have with the City Council when they meet in May.

Ms. Sahlstrom showed the Commission what the City provides for architecture guidelines on the current website. The City design guidelines are defined in the link for Chapter 31 of the Municipal Code. There are no graphics or examples of these guidelines presented on the site at this time. Ms. Sahlstrom suggested that the first step could be pulling these guidelines on the Historic Preservation page in a more accessible manner.

Mr. Hallock agreed and added that there is value in having a more user-friendly interface when presenting the design guidelines to the public. Ms. Sahlstrom said that, in most cases, when someone has to do work in the City they call the Planning Division directly and ask for information and requirements for doing work Historic properties. There are definite opportunities though to flesh out the current website with information already provided, like Staff contacts, in an easier presentation.

Mr. Hallock stated that creating a PDF that defined the guidelines more simply and was supported by graphics would be a good item to bring to the City Council. Ms. Sahlstrom suggested that the first step could be better organization of links and items.

Barry Snell added it may be beneficial to provide an interactive application process.

Ms. Sahlstrom showed staff a link on the City website to the Ames Downtown page. This page is a good resource for information about the Downtown District, photographs of the district, and grant opportunity and applications.

Mr. Grevstad-Nordbrock added that it would be greatly beneficial if the webpage could provide a map of the Historic Districts and what properties are contributing and non-contributing. Ms. Sahlstrom stated that the City already has maps that show that information, but are not posted on the website.

Mr. Grevstad-Nordbrock noted that this information would be beneficial for developers in seeing if the work their doing has tax incentive opportunities. Ms. Sahlstrom added that another link that could be helpful would one on the webpage that sends one to a map of the Historic District overlay. This way one can see if their property falls within a historic district.

Mr. Grevstad-Nordbrock stated it would also be beneficial if the site could provide a clear definition about what properties are local and/or national landmarks.

Ms. Sahlstrom shared a document that discussed the demolition of contributing garages within the district. It included a map and photographs of contributing garages. It also described the whole process. This shows the City has the resources requested. It is just a matter of getting it on the website.

Susan Minks asked if Chapter 31 should reflect Downtown District. Mr. Hallock said it was nationally designated and not truly under their control. Mr. Hallock added there should be some clarity in Chapter 31 about which districts are designated local and which are national.

Ms. Sahlstrom showed the Commission what the City site currently shares in regards to the national register. There are photographs of designated sites and link to the national register. Mr. Hallock stated he would find it beneficial if the photographs on the City site work clickable links that led the public to more information about that particular property.

Mr. Grevstad-Nordbrock added that, if Staff found time, it would be nice if they could extract the statement of significance from the designated sites' nominations. This would let people know why this site was historically significant.

Mr. Hallock added that pictures may have greater value than simply a document, but both could be informational for those wanted to look into these properties.

Lisa Hovis asked if the photographs would be easy to get. Ms. Sahlstrom said they should be easy to access and add to the website.

Ms. Sahlstrom discussed how the City website currently shares information about financial incentives. The website currently has it embedded within the Economic Façade Assistance section of the site. This information is not currently being shared under the Historic Preservation area of the website.

Mr. Grevstad-Nordbrock said that may confuse people some of these grants are not only for the façade of the building. It would be preferable if preservation-specific incentives were posted to the Historic Preservation section of the site.

Ms. Sahlstrom continued going through the Historic Preservation webpage, and noted that the website does not share a link to the Ames Historical Society or provide a lot of information the history of Ames. Adding a link to the Ames Historical Society should be easy.

Ms. Sahlstrom stated it may be beneficial to add a Frequently Asked Questions section to the Historic Preservation webpage. Mr. Hallock said it would be a good idea. Barry Snell said that would be a good, but would probably be best to do toward the end of the website update.

Mr. Grevstad-Nordbrock asked if there was information on the site about the City's current CLG status. Ms. Sahlstrom said she did not believe so, but it would be easy to add.

Mr. Grevstad-Nordbrock said a flow chart of the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) process could benefit applicants. Ms. Sahlstrom shared that the site currently has a timeline of the COA process.

Mr. Grevstad-Nordbrock said that information was good, but he would like it to start even earlier in the COA process and assist with letting people know if someone is within a historic district and has a contributing property.

Mr. Hallock stated the main factor currently is seeing what Staff and the Commission can do for website upgrades that would not be considered a budget item. If they can update the website with the information and resources they currently have, it helps the Commission better define what sort of items they would need to ask for with Council that would require a budget.

Mr. Grevstad-Nordbrock said now is the perfect to promote the incentives available because of the newly designated Downtown District.

Ms. Sahlstrom shared the cover sheet that is attached with the application for a COA. Mr. Hallock said that it would be good to promote that City's assistance with helping applicants with the COA process. Ms. Sahlstrom stated that the city of Dubuque shared benefits of the Historic District. The City could implement something similar.

Mr. Grevstad-Nordbrock said he would like to see more upon sustainability for the historic district. Sustainability is a popular topic in preservation currently.

Mr. Hallock reiterated the necessity of having clear definition of what districts are local and national designated.

Mr. Grevstad-Nordbrock asked if the City has had CLG grants in the past. Ray Anderson, Planner, said they have. Mr. Grevstad-Nordbrock asked if webpage work would be applicable to a grant. Ms. Sahlstrom said that would be a good conversation to have with Council when they meet with the Commission in May.

Ms. Hovis noticed the current COA application had the old meeting time. Staff will make that change.

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#### **DISCUSS 2019 PRESERVE IOWA SUMMIT**

Ray Anderson, Planner, explained that Preserve Iowa Summit is June 6-8 in Newton, Iowa. Staff would like to know which Commissioners would like to attend the event this year.

Mr. Grevstad-Nordbrock will be presenting this year at the summit. Mr. Hallock stated he would like to attend. Melissa Klein-Hewitt would like to attend on Saturday only. The rest of the Commission is unable to attend.

Mr. Anderson stated he will get that information submitted and interested Commission members registered.

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COMMISSION COMMENTS: Lisa Hovis discussed her update in regards to plaques and signage for Main Street. Her recommendation was the go with a laminate similar to the historical information sign current in the Depot area in Downtown.

The material for the panel portion is approximately \$185. The steel stand is more expensive at approximate \$750. The total price is reasonable considering the durability of the plaque.

The panel can be large, informative, and allow for full pictures that represent that architecture of the Downtown District.

Mr. Hallock asked if the plaques would be budget through the education line. Mr. Anderson said they would have to look into that. It may be possible to discuss if could be budgeted with the Ames Historical Society. They are currently budgeted for plaques.

Ms. Sahlstrom asked if Ms. Hovis could send the picture of the plaques to Staff.

Mr. Snell asked who would be in charge of design. Ms. Hovis said that the Ames Historical Society and she would work on it together.

Mr. Grevstad-Nordbrock asked who did the one for the Depot. Ms. Hovis said she believed it was done by Iowa State students.

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The Commission discussed the assistance of Iowa State students being involved in designing the plaques.

Ms. Sahlstrom asked if Ms. Hovis talked with the Chamber about sign locations. She replied they did not, but were supportive of the signs.

Mr. Snell asked about designing them in pairs so each was a little different. Ms. Hovis agreed, and that the signs would be unique to their placement.

The Commission welcomed new member, Megan Klein-Hewitt.

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STAFF COMMENTS: Ms. Sahlstrom reminded the Commission that Historic Preservation Awards presentation and proclamation would be at the City Council meeting held on April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Mr. Hallock stated he will be present for that Council meeting.

Staff welcomed Megan Klein-Hewitt as well. Mr. Anderson stated they have a new commission member orientation that they will arrange at a later time.

Ms. Sahlstrom updated the Commission on the current COA list and their current statue in the COA process. Ms. Sahlstrom asked if Mr. Hallock would pass this list and information to neighborhood associations. Mr. Hallock said that he would.

Ms. Sahlstrom said that she spoken with the State about getting a speaker come and present at a Commission meeting. Currently, they are looking to present at the meeting to be held in either August or September.

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MOTION TO ADJOURN:

MOTION: (Grevstad-Nordbrock/Hovis) to adjourn the meeting.

*MOTION PASSED: (6-0)*

The meeting adjourned at 7:12PM.

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Peter Hallock, Chairperson  
Historic Preservation Commission

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Ben Lievens, Recording Secretary  
Department of Planning & Housing