



Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Agenda

Monday, May 5, 2025 - 3:00 PM

City Offices (Building 18, Legacy Plaza) - Large Conference Room
303 W 4th St N, Suite 501
Newton, IA 50208

- I. Roll Call
- II. Review of Minutes of Previous Meeting:
- III. Items from City Staff
- IV. Items from Commissioners
- V. Items from Citizens
- VI. Communications from SHPO, IEDA, Dept. of Cultural Affairs or other entity with information relating to historic preservation.
- VII. Adjourn

ADA Compliance: The City of Newton is pleased to provide reasonable accommodations, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, for those individuals or groups who require assistance in being able to participate in the meeting. Please contact the Community Development Department at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting by calling 641-792-6622 to arrange for accommodations to be provided.

Chair: Larry Hurto; **Members:** Wes Ranard, Rita Reinheimer, Toni Peska, Kelly Bennett

Meeting Minutes

NEWTON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Community Development/Community Services/Public Works
Large Conference Room
303 West 4th Street North, Suite 501
Newton, IA 50208

Date: April 07, 2025

Time: 3:03 pm

Meeting called to order by: Chair Hurto

ROLL CALL

Board Members Present: Hurto, Reinheimer, Bennett, Peska, Ranard

Staff and Others Present: Varsha Borde – City Planner
Mark Hallam – Council member

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Chair Larry Hurto questioned if there was anyone present that may require special assistance in being able to participate in this public meeting. There was no response. Chair Hurto also asked about assistance requirements to the meeting participants.

Chair Hurto welcomed council member Hallam to the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motioned by Bennett; 2nd by Peska. Approved 5-0 VV with an editorial change.

CERTIFICATION OF IOWA OPEN MEETINGS LAW

Borde confirms.

ITEMS FROM CITY STAFF

1. Borde continued the discussion from the last meeting regarding signage for the historic streets. Borde shared minutes of HPC minutes from the September 2022 meeting. At that time, there were discussions about having signs marking historic districts/ streets on top of street signs.
Hurto enquired if the city would pay a portion of the costs.
Hallam said that he felt it was worth considering.
Reinheimer talked about options and felt that if the sign was in a yard, people would have to get out of the car to see them. Reinheimer said that we have many new districts now and it would be worth discussing.
There was further discussion on options to fix the historic sign to the street sign. Hurto asked about the material and wondered if prison labor could be utilized to make the signs. There was further discussion

if the streets defining downtown be marked with the historic signs. It was mentioned that Main Street director Erin Yeager would be a good resource for input on this.

To summarize, it was decided that this could be explored and have others involved. Next steps -

- Is there grant money available for the signs?
- Contact Alison at SHPO
- HRDP grant – check with Erin Chambers
- Is DOT permission required?

2. Borde shared that the CLG grant was due in August. The commission decided not to pursue the grant at this time.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Ranard – none

Reinheimer – Mentioned that the semi-final drafts for 3 plaques will be ready by the next meeting. Hurto asked who to hand over the plaques to. Reinheimer listed the various buildings that already had plaques done.

Bennett – none

Peska – Congratulated Bennett for his granddaughter's birth. Peska thanked Bennett for arranging the table for the Downtown Dreams event. Peska also mentioned that the bunkers had been removed from the courthouse. There was discussion regarding the bunkers. Reinheimer said that snow cleaning around the benches was tough.

Hurto – Larry's HPC Report Larry's HPC Report – April 7, 2025 - Attached

Hurto said that he was working on writing for some plaques and asked for everybody's input. Hurto asked if there was more information on Cappy's building.

ITEMS FROM CITIZENS -

COMMUNICATIONS FROM STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE AND/OR DEPT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS.

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by Reinheimer, 2nd by Ranard, Approved 4.0 by VV. 4:09 pm

Larry's HPC Report – April 7, 2025

1. I received a mailing from the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) inviting HPC to become a member. This organization apparently believes we operate a museum or historic site. They offer online training and development courses, and specifically mention the upcoming 250th anniversary of the United States.
2. At our March meeting I reported that the Des Moines HPC nominated Grant Elementary School to be preserved for future generations. Related to this a story by Addison Lathers titled “In Neglect: Hazardous church-owned homes become blight on Drake neighborhood” appeared in *The Des Moines Register* on April 2, 2025, pp. 1A, 6A-7A, which I invite Commissioners to peruse. That can be seen at the Newton Public Library.
3. Four out of five of our Commissioners attended “Downtown Dreams” on April 3. I also saw former Commissioners Fred Chabot and Tanya Michener there. We were pleased to have our current staffer, Varsha Borde, join us at our table. Thanks to Commissioner Bennett for setting this up. Mayor George made a few remarks, and I saw Councilmen Ervin, Simbro, and Mills there. Also, Erin Chambers and Lisa Bernal. Craig Armstrong emceed the program, which featured Guest Speaker Jerry Schwaller, who, with his wife, Rachel, is developer of Gray Moon Public Market (built as the Montgomery Ward store in 1929). Team Bennett won the Newton Trivia Contest which Danielle Rogers posed the questions for (!). No prize, but we covered ourselves with glory!
4. I completed my plaque assignments, as follows: Evans & Westbrook, Independent Oil Station; Newton Daily News, and Newton City Hall and Fire Station, which I shared with the Commission for editorial comment. I wonder if we’ll have to contact former Commissioner Michener for assistance in proceeding with getting the plaques made.

