



Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Agenda

Monday, August 4, 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:
 1. Review of Minutes of Previous Meeting:6.2.2025
- III. Certification of open meetings law
- IV. Items from Commissioners
- V. Items from Staff
 1. Signage
- VI. Items from Citizens
- VII. Communications from the SHPO, IEDA, Dept. of Cultural Affairs, or any other entity with information relating to historic preservation.
- VIII. 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: June 02, 2025

Time: 3:00 pm

Meeting called to order by: Chair Hurto

ROLL CALL

Board Members Present: Hurto, Reinheimer, Peska, Ranard

Staff and Others Present: Varsha Borde – City Planner
Erin Yeager – Executive Director, Newton Mainstreet
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.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Reinheimer to approve minutes with corrections; 2nd by Reinheimer. Approved 4-0 VV

CERTIFICATION OF IOWA OPEN MEETINGS LAW

Borde confirms.

ITEMS FROM CITY STAFF

1. Signage for Historic Districts –The following topics were discussed.
 - a. Council member Hallam asked about budget for HPCs of other cities.
 - b. Getting help from DMACC or High school students with the plaques.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Peska – None

Ranard - Enquired about plaques. He has identified 6 to work on. There was discussion on period of significance that should be included on the plaques. Reinheimer mentioned that they typically stopped at the 1960s, as most change happened at that time. There was more discussion on here to find more information on the buildings that could be printed on the plaques. It was suggested that Kim Didier might

know where to find more information on the buildings. Craig Nade has a Facebook page where he shares information about Newton (You Know You Are from Newton, IA if...). Reinheimer will share the list of completed plaques.

Reinheimer – Mentioned that she had attended a presentation by National Trust For Historic Presentation, (A requirement for continuing education for the Commissioners.). Reinheimer’s notes are attached. She will also share the link to the presentation if available.

Hurto – Report attached.

ITEMS FROM CITIZENS –

Council member Hallam discussed the white brick house at 1100 N 3rd Ave E that was demolished.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by Peska, 2nd by Reinheimer, Approved 4.0 by VV. 3:58 pm

Larry's HPC Report – June 2, 2025

1. On Mother's Day, in anticipation of Memorial Day, I took some time to trim around the graves of seven Underground Railroad freedom seekers who enlisted in the Union Army during the Civil War: Alexander E. Fine (1842-1919), Anderson Hays (1836-1923), Lewis Mays (1847-1911); Clement Miller (1837-1914), aka Clement Graves; John Ross Miller (1841-1923), aka John Graves, aka John Ross, aka John Sherer, aka John R. Sherer; William Moore (c. 1832-1890); and Walker Waldon/Waldron (1838-1913), aka Walker Davis. I also secured flags for a couple of their markers.
2. The Oliver C. and Delia Meredith House, located at 602 1st Ave. E., is currently being renovated. Built in 1900, the building is considered a contributing resource to our First Avenue East Residential Historic District.
3. On Thursday, May 22, I was able to get onto the roof of First United Methodist Church, 210 N. 2nd Ave. E., to see the restoration work on the hail-damaged, copper-covered dome up-close and personal. I'd invited Christopher Braunschweig, of Newton News, to inspect the work with me. Dylan Davis, project superintendent for Breiholz Construction, and Ceko Lilly, a journeyman carpenter from Des Moines, gave us the tour. Also in the group were Church Trustees Kimbra Korte and Fred Chabot. Fred is, of course, former chair of the HPC. Chris gave the \$1.2 million project front-page notice in the May 27 edition of the paper. The Church was built in 1914, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of our Downtown Historic District.

link —

Rita .

Engaging Local Decision-Makers to Support Historic Preservation (Multiple speakers) presented by National Trust for Historic Preservation, 29 May 2025

Powers of Local Historic Preservation

1. Typical historic preservation laws
 - A. Design review / issue or deny Certificates of Appropriateness
 - B. Demolition stays & denials
 - C. Designations (of historic districts, etc.)
2. Zoning vs. no zoning – decision-making power for HP offices or HPCs etc. usually comes from power in local zoning laws
3. Power has gone from:
 - A. ordinances by city code (written 1930s-1980; HP usually hands off after the rules were written) to
 - B. general guidelines (1980s-2010; these were vaguely worded guidelines referencing specific local context) to
 - C. zoning references (2010s-present day; more specific language allowing hand-on decision making using photos of good design, local preservation guidelines, etc.)

Important local venues whose actions can affect historic districts (this list from Charleston, SC):

City Council, Planning Commission (handles rezoning, ordinance changes), Board of Zoning Appeals, Board of Architectural Review (handles building design), Design Review Board, Technical Review Committee (site plan)

Planning is so important to get a people-friendly historic district (e.g., setback density, lot coverage)

***HPC: Read your zoning codes to see if you even create the type of community & design you envision

Power of community connections:

1. ***Homework assignment: Find out what your community cares about in a neighborhood (residential or business)
2. Then educate people what HPC, zoning etc. groups do and what they care about
3. Who are the grassroots officials who need to be on your preservation team? You need to influence the institutional positions of power

Areas where preservation aligns with Planning & Zoning:

1. Housing
 - A. What types of housing are in your historic districts and in older non-historic districts: 1 story, 2 story, 4-plex, high rise, etc.?
 - B. Does your historic district prohibit some types of housing?
 - C. What gets zoned is what is built in our historic districts (typically very limited types of buildings and building materials that would be illegal to build today; with proper zoning there's no reason why larger buildings – housing units or commercial – couldn't be built)
2. Economic Development
 - A. City gov't, planner, etc. should check out "Urban 3" website: analysis you can call Urban 3 for help
3. Sustainability
 - A. Saving buildings and/or removing vs. reusing or recycling materials from buildings to be demolished

The spectrum of preservation (Reusing old buildings > Document > Policy & Protection) is actually a cycle that should keep going on and on

1. Reusing older buildings is a grassroots effort
2. Documenting is a good HPC project (write the history, share the stories of buildings)
3. Policy & protection is an institutional effort (setting new guidelines)

Preservation groups should make friends with groups of decision-makers:

1. Elected officials
2. Appointed officials
3. City staff (planners & zoning)
4. Other groups (Chamber of Commerce, Housing Development, religious leaders, Rotary, Kiwanis, etc. – these last 3 groups count city decision-makers in their ranks)

***Have a spreadsheet of grassroots people who know, work with, or are friends with people in power. You may be able to enlist them to help you contact the decision-makers on issues of importance to preservation.

If your city has a mayor/council type government, don't just talk to the mayor about preservation issues – s/he doesn't vote – it's the council members who have the power

If the city has a city manager, s/he has the majority of power, although the council controls the budget, can shape new building and preservation projects, or deny buildings outright

Get architects, developers, etc. appointed to city boards & commissions, attend city council meetings and speak out on preservation issues when they arise.

Get preservation ideas into city plan/downtown plan; do an historic resource survey

Priorities of local elected officials vs. citizens (from Natl. League of Cities survey):

Business Attraction, Downtown Revitalization & Workforce Development Strategies
Used by Mayors to Address Economic Revitalization

Importance Rank by Mayors	Area of Interest	Importance Rank by Citizens
1	Economic Development	4 (tie)
2	Infrastructure	1
3	Housing	4 (tie)
4 (tie)	Health/Human Services	6
4 (tie)	Public Safety	7
6	Engery/Environment	2
7	Education	3

Need an ordinance for getting building owners to fix up their "demolition-by-neglect" buildings; find out what is the community's tolerance for such buildings

1. City's building code probably grants it the ability to fix leaky roof, stabilize walls, etc. of a building that violates the city code (if not, it should)
2. Provide a pathway for HPC to refer a building it thinks should be checked by city
3. Have strong written consequences for owners who don't bring their buildings to code (a \$500 fine once a year isn't enough – hit 'em hard enough in the pocketbook to get results)
4. Give owner a 1-year period to fix the problems, provide suggestions, preservation briefs, other info resources to help the owner

