

West Branch Historic Preservation Commission

Wednesday, November 19, 2025

City Council Chambers, 110 North Poplar Street

Commission Members Present: Dana Gafeller, Peggy Hermann, John Fuller, Lou Picek, Liz Seiberling

City Staff Present: Adam Kofoed

Public Present: Will (william-harter@uiowa.edu), Seth, and Thea, students from the University of Iowa

1. Call to Order.
2. Roll Call.
3. Approve Consent Agenda:
 - a. Approve minutes from the October 15, 2025 meeting.
 - i. Moved by: Lou Picek
 - ii. Seconded by: John Fuller
 - iii. All ayes. The motion carries
4. Non-Consent Agenda:
 - a. Review and approve awning design permit for the Serving Café, 209 E. Main Street.
 - i. Discussion:
 1. Illumination intent is unclear. It is allowed to be lit from the ground. It is assumed that the sign will not be self-illuminated.
 - ii. Moved by: John Fuller on the condition that the lighting strategy is confirmed to be an appropriate type, facing upwards.
 - iii. Seconded by: Lou Picek
 - iv. All ayes. The motion carries
5. Discussion/Presentation – U of I Student Team update
 - a. CLG (Certified Local Government) status:
 - i. This is being finalized.
 - ii. The City is 95% complete with the submission.
 - iii. SHPO (State Historic Preservation Office) grants become available upon status completion.
 - iv. Maintaining status should be achievable as many requirements are already being met.
 - v. The team has been working with SHPO to get recommendations for the group.

New items include:

1. Including an educational component to provide citizens with information about the historic preservation efforts and processes. It was noted that this could be a page on the website, for example.
2. Participate in more historic preservation trainings.
 - a. CAMP (Commission Assistance and Mentoring Program). Provides location preservation training, exercises, resources, and mentoring. The cost is a \$75 one-time fee.
 - b. NAPC webinar series. These are free.
 - c. NAPC in-person summit “Preserve Iowa Summit” on June 2 and 3, 2026 in Ankeny, IA.

vi. SHPO representative, Allison Archambo: allison.archambo@iowaEDA.com

- vii. A specific number of hours for training time required was not given.
- viii. Total amount of grant funding given out last year to CLGs, was just under \$100,000.
- ix. Issues:
 - 1. Time for deliberation of a signage application.
 - 2. Overlap of historic district maps.
 - 3. The U of I group will provide suggestions as a part of their deliverable.
- x. Adam would like to know what the realistic number of hours required dedicated to CLG maintenance. Comments were not provided by Allison on this topic.
- xi. A commission member is to be responsible for documentation of efforts – namely training documentation.

6. Comments from Commission Members:

- a. Main Street design meeting recap:
 - i. Enforcement of ordinances was brought up and discussed who is responsible for enforcement if there is an ordinance in place. Presently there is nothing in the ordinances that protects grounds, sidewalks, etc.
 - 1. Painting on sidewalks is seen as art/free speech by individuals.
 - 2. Adam would enforce ordinances if they apply.
 - 3. Main Street can provide the list of issues to Adam to follow up on.

7. Next Regular Meeting: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 at 6:30pm

8. Adjourn

- a. Moved by: John Fuller
- b. Seconded By: Lou Picek
- c. All ayes. The motion carries