



# Historic West Des Moines Master Plan Steering Committee – 2021 Update

Wednesday, February 16, 2022, 4:30 pm

## MINUTES

- I. Chair calls meeting to order – called to order at 4:40 pm
  - a. Attendance
    - i. Committee members
      1. Mitchell Callahan
      2. Nate Hon
      3. Meredith Wells
      4. Renee Hardman
      5. Ralph Haskins
      6. Mark Veiock
      7. Steve Frevert
      8. Cleo Underwood
      9. Kevin Trevillyan
      10. Renae Johanningmeier
      11. Scott Hatfield
      12. Scott Cutler
      13. Katherine Harrington
      14. Vicki Long Hill
      15. Steph Trannel – via Teams
      16. Julie Eliason – via Teams
      17. Debbie Westphal Swander – via Teams
    - ii. Staff Members
      1. Clyde Evans
      2. Brad Munford

3. Christine Gordon

iii. Consultant

1. Mike Hoffman – Teska – via Teams
2. Erin Cigliano – Teska - via Teams
3. Ed Torrez – BauerLatoza Studio - via teams

iv. Guests

1. Blain Hormann
2. Victoria Veiock
3. MJ Hoag
4. Dean Newman
5. Nick Waage
6. Brenda Clauseman
7. Jeff Duncan
8. Dana Duncan
9. Francisco Gomez
10. Ramona Gomez
11. Kevin Goodlaxson
12. Nick Kuhn
13. Tom Hyde
14. Kay Schiller
15. Volker Liebeseller
16. Sarah Kehlenbeck
17. Kent Kehlenbeck
18. Curtis Ehler
19. Larry – via Teams
20. Jenea Veazey – via Teams
21. Jason Keigley – via Teams
22. Bobbie – Via Teams

- II. Committee Approves the Agenda – Motion by Mitchell Callahan, Seconded by Katherine Harrington – all in favor
- III. Approval of February 2, 2022, Minutes – change on page 5 of 8 – add to Victoria Veiock’ s comments, “if there are changes to the area, they should look like the area.” motion by Steve Frevert, seconded by Katherine Harrington, Scott Hatfield abstaining – all in favor
- IV. Opening Statement is read for all in attendance – Read by Meredith Wells

- V. Citizen Forum
  - a. MJ Hoag – did a presentation about pedestrian safety – included suggestions about crosswalks could look like railroad tracks
  - b. Brad Mumford – noted the two written comments submitted before the meeting from people who could not be at the meeting
- VI. Discussion of Historic Design Guidelines – Mike Hoffman (Teska) – presented the PowerPoint slides
  - a. Mike Hoffman referenced the Valley Junction Architectural Survey dated 1998. Ed Torrez spoke the survey is a good start, but it is not very in depth. A historical research survey could get more in the history of properties as well as the architectural history of a building.
  - b. Brad Munford – Shared screen to look at the VJ Architectural Survey
  - c. Ralph Haskins – would like architectural guidelines to preserve the area. We would have the Design Guidelines, then Historic Preservation Guidelines and then zoning.
  - d. Ed Torrez – the current Design Guidelines do address the current designated properties
  - e. Mike Hoffman – if there is interest in creating a historic district for the area, a survey would need to be done. And that is beyond the scope of work of the current contract with Teska.
  - f. Ed Torrez - Historic Resources Survey – they would recommend that if the Committee wants to make the historic area larger than it currently is.
  - g. Debbie Westphal-Swander – to Ralph Haskins comments, there are comments in the Design Guidelines that do speak to the historical properties. She asked for the photos to go with 1998 survey – Christine Gordon said they are getting scanned in and will be made available to the Committee.
  - h. Julie Eliason – more contributing buildings than just the 53. Question to group – do we feel the 1998 survey gives us the buildings we want to add to the 53 or do we need a different survey.
  - i. Ed Torrez – there is not enough information in the 1998 survey to determine if the buildings are historical. Too many buildings in it – nearly 1,000. The kind of survey the Committee wants could take 9 months to a year at about \$100/hour. There is a science and method to determining which structures are historical. Reconnaissance survey is a good place to start – if we start with 150 properties and which are the ones we start with.
  - j. Kevin Trevillyan – clarified that if we want a historical district, we need a more detailed survey
  - k. Ed Torrez – yes, it takes time. Similar to doing a thesis on every property.
  - l. Ralph Haskins – We want to make our own district that is based on our own guidelines, and it would supplement
  - m. Meredith Wells – brought up at last meeting to create this district
  - n. Ralph Haskins – we can create our own district if we want to, how we want to. Nate Hon brought City of Des Moines example – he thinks that is too much, but we could create something similar.

- o. Meredith Wells – if we are going down the path of Historic Ordinance, then I am going to rely on experts like Ed Torrez and Steve Frevert
- p. Ralph Haskins – Asked Mike Hoffman if he has experience creating a Historic Preservation Ordinance
- q. Mike Hoffman - not enough experience
- r. Ed Torrez – Certified Local Government – recommends we become a COG – opens funding opportunities. He suggests we finish the Design Guidelines then go after the COG after the Design Guidelines are approved.
- s. Meredith Wells – Historical Ordinance not in original scope of work, so yes, maybe we should finish the Design Guidelines, then work on Historical Ordinance
- t. Nate Hon – What about continuing the moratorium? Making suggestions to City Council at February 21<sup>st</sup>.
- u. Meredith Wells – asked Committee if we could go off agenda and discuss the moratorium for a bit. Limit the discussion to 20 minutes
- v. Nate Hon – No tear downs for a period time
- w. Mitchell Callahan – building demolition 100 and 200 block of business district, all contributing building in that area
- x. Ralph Haskins – need to define area
- y. Meredith Wells – are we talking about the Mixed-Use Commercial?
- z. Steve Frevert – the National Register of Historic places map or the red zone?
- aa. Mitchell Callahan – would like to limit it to the 100 & 200 block only.
- bb. Frank Duncan – when he was on council in 1970’s ordinance was approved that would not allow tear down without approval by City Council anywhere on 5<sup>th</sup> Street from Railroad to Vine – he has asked for the minutes from the meetings to show the ordinance that was passed. He asked the status of getting those minutes. Lots of buildings in this area are historical. Had trouble finding parking when he shopped for the holidays.
  - i. Kevin Trevellyan said he has not gotten an update. The information would come from the City Clerk.
- cc. Dean Newman – parents grew up across the tracks, they moved people from south of tracks to here. Now feel that is what is happening now. Take a closer look at who you are displacing. His dad owned 7 acres and now someone else owns the land. He dies in a 2-bedroom house staring out with a broken heart.
- dd. Meredith Wells – We all care about the historical buildings. Also need a timeline for how long it’s going to last.
- ee. Nate Hon – should cover MUC and not drafft this out.
- ff. Kevin Trevellyan – Remember Ed Torrez said it could take 9 months to a year.

- gg. Meredith Wells – can we do a moratorium without a timeline?
- hh. Vicki Long Hill – Are we creating a moratorium connected to a historic preservation commission
- ii. Steve Frevert – 6-month demolition moratorium on contributing buildings in the existing Historic Register District. Seconded by Katherine Harrington.
- i. Discussion of Motion
1. Debbie Westphal-Swander – lots of thoughts about demolition of buildings. Once they are gone, they are gone. Our responsibility is to consider all properties, even those not listed as contributing. I am okay with the red district we had already discussed. And we need to do more research on more properties.
  2. Steve Frevert – I put a motion to give us something to discuss.
  3. Meredith Wells – we could take a longer time to review all buildings, but we have a deadline of March 1<sup>st</sup> of when the moratorium ends
  4. Nate Hon – agree with Debbie Westphal-Swander – we need to look beyond and at all buildings
- ii. Vote on Motion –
1. Yes - 8
  2. No – 5
- jj. Ralph Haskins made a motion – Moratorium on demotion of all buildings in Valley Junction Mixed Use area for 6 months; except for 111 & 113 5<sup>th</sup> Street. Seconded by Nate Hon.
- i. Discussion of Motion
1. Steve Frevert- wants to clarify there are no non-contributing buildings outside the area. The black properties on the National Register map. He listed the addresses. Clarify all of these buildings cannot be torn down under Ralph Haskin’s motion. Many of these buildings are young. He would like historical defined.
  2. Ralph Haskins – we get to decide what is historical
  3. Kevin Trevillyan – This motion is about looking at all of the buildings, not just the contributing ones and looking at buildings for its history not just the standards of Historic Places.
  4. Renee Hardman – why 6 months? Who on this committee has this expertise?
  5. Meredith Wells – We need to have a timeframe attached to a moratorium. And maybe in 6 months we would have more information about the other buildings
  6. Nate Hon – between our knowledge and the consultants
  7. Kevin Trevillyan – it was part of the charge of this group to document the history of the buildings – we know its historical based on its history.?

8. Renee Hardman – there is criteria established. What is going to be accomplished in 6 months?
9. Kevin Trevillyan – we have a list of contributing based on national register, but not based on the history within that building
10. Ralph Haskins – it gives us time to make decisions based on facts and research. GMigs is an example of noncontributing building that should be saved based on its history.
11. Debbie Westphal-Swander – informing ourselves is extremely important. We need to gather the information so we can make informed decisions.
12. Nick Waage – calling this area Mixed Use? Has this area been rezoned? I thought when the Mayor set this committee up, you get to decide what is historic and what is not.
  - a. Mike Hoffman – the area we are showing in red is the same except it doesn't go into the 500 block
  - b. Mitchell Callahan, Meredith Wells, and Scott Cutler – that was not our understanding of the committee
13. Scott Cutler – is this extending the existing moratorium or only demolition?
  - a. Ralph Haskins – we have design guidelines in place to address changes to building, but we do not want permanent demolition that cannot be undone.

ii. Vote on motion

1. Yes – 12
2. No - 1

- VII. Discussion of Design Guidelines for the Railroad Avenue District – Teska - Erin Cigliano reviewed the PowerPoint slides
- a. Katherine Harrington – wants to continue character of Valley Junction along Railroad. This is our area to shine. This area could shine better. A unique opportunity
  - b. Meredith Wells – we have two areas – south of Railroad and north of Railroad
  - c. Nate Hon – screening? Do we need a fencing screening for the residential buildings? Is it beyond greenery?
  - d. Erin Cigliano – in this area we haven't said no fencing (no chain-link though) – kept it general – can be more detailed in zoning
  - e. Clyde Evans – code allows 6-foot fence or landscape buffering - not a lot of room for landscape buffering
  - f. Kevin Trevillyan – how far north from Railroad Ave? Why are we eliminating single family affordable housing for commercial?

- i. Mike Hoffman – look at the area and there are commercial buildings that could be redeveloped without a change in use. Yes, keeping the existing housing and condition of those.
    - ii. Kevin Trevillyan – the condition of the homes should not part of the consideration – leave the single family along
  - g. Nate Hon – keep character of 5<sup>th</sup> Street on north side of Railroad and more modern south of Railroad
  - h. Kevin Trevillyan – how are you going to staircase buildings next to one story house? How would people like larger buildings next to their single-family house?
  - i. Erin Cigliano – the boundaries for this area are softer – we can look at these closer
  - j. Ralph Haskins – how do you include these concepts into a master plan?
  - k. Erin Cigliano – we don't get into the exact detail of what should go where but give general guidelines.
  - l. Katherine Harrington – Create a wish list of the kind of development we want to see.
  - m. Steph Trannel – I think it's important to reinforce that these guidelines would apply to properties that are rehabbed and built organically, there is no coordinated effort to seize property from existing commercial or residential property owners. That is a rumor that is circulated widely and frequently and has taken up residence in the minds of many despite no evidence of that happening.
  - n. Nick Waage – be careful. Reference Scott Cutler's propose development at 4<sup>th</sup> & Railroad and what kind of noise and traffic that would be next to single family houses.
    - i. Erin Cigliano – there are recommendations in the guidelines to spell out where these kinds of developments should go and will be further defined in zoning. Also, with the distinguishing between north and south of Railroad.
  - o. Kent Kehlenbeck - those are all great ideas, but they are ideas that were asked for before. How can you do a height restriction and do a parking garage? Be aware of smells from restaurants.
  - p. Brenda Clauseman - love the idea of patios but not facing Railroad. Patios along alleys.
  - q. Meredith Wells – agrees about Railroad
  - r. Steve Frevert – road diet and bump outs is the only way to slow Railroad down.
  - s. Blain Hormann – love this area and talking about these ideas – stop the negative talk of entertainment – he would like to have a restaurant near him and would like more entertainment in the area.
  - t. Tom Hyde - north and south of Railroad are different and should have different guidelines.
  - u. Clyde Evans – will work with Consultant to adjust Railroad area design guidelines
  - v. Mike Hoffman – next meeting needs to discuss Transitional Area and the Mixed Industrial Area – possibly a mini visual preference survey
- VIII. Meeting adjourned at 6:53 pm

#### Handouts

- Power point slides dated February 16, 2022
- Written public comments

#### Staff Contacts:

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Master Plan on Website: <https://www.wdm.iowa.gov/government/community-economic-development/historic-west-des-moines-master-plan>

Project website: <https://historicwdm.com/>

#### Future Meetings:

February 21<sup>st</sup> at 5:30 – City Council Meeting – Design Guidelines to be presented

March 9<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 – Steering Committee Meeting