

CLAYTON COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes for January 15, 2026

The January 15, 2026 meeting of members of the Clayton County Historic Preservation Commission (CCHPC) was held at the Community Center at Garnavillo, Iowa between 2:20 and 3:27 pm. Attending on site were Chair Roger Thomas, Secretary Chris Schoen, Ellen Collins, Ed Ruff, Bob Meyer, and Kathy Koether. Vice Chair Brandie Backes was absent.

Guests included several members of the Northeast Iowa Vietnam Veterans (Dennis Mason, Randy Moose, Mike Schmeltzer, Greg Clark, Jerry Kruse, and Larry Moser), Emily Sadewasser from the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque, and two individuals from the Architecture Department at Iowa State University (ISU) that were contracted by the veterans to prepare a design for the wayside park.

Prior to beginning the meeting, the Commissioners and veterans viewed the project landscaping display materials presented by the ISU contractor for planning purposes. These included (1) a model of the existing contours, (2) cutouts that could be placed on the model at proposed locations for the veterans memorial, restrooms, shelter, picnic tables, flagpoles, and landscape vegetation (trees, shrubs, flower beds, etc.), (3) examples of different styles of shelters and playground equipment to be considered, and (4) a board on which people could identify preferred landscape and structural elements for the project.

A motion was made to approve the agenda by Collins and seconded by Schoen. The motion was passed unanimously. Minutes from the December 12, 2025 meeting were reviewed. Schoen made a motion to approve the minutes. Meyer seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Thomas reported that the current balance for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, which began July 1, was \$1444.87.

OLD BUSINESS

Thomas reported that as the organizing lead for the 2026 Museum Crawl planned in June, he has contacted the 15 museums in Clayton County, the Elkader Opera House, and Susan Snow, the Superintendent for the Effigy Mounds National Monument. All of the invited museums agreed to participate. The venues be open for their regular hours and perhaps additional hours if they care to. The Museum Crawl Passport materials will list the regular hours and contact information. QR codes will link with the Clayton County webpage for more information. Thomas is setting up the Passport for printing.

Collins asked if it was okay to include the cemetery sites that may be available for viewing with the Museum Crawl information. Thomas agreed to include it.

Thomas reported that he reviewed the 2025 yearend report of the activities of the CCHPC with the Clayton County Board of Supervisors for their approval and has submitted the report to the SHPO. Twenty items were identified in the 2026 CCHPC Work Plan, which is attached to the end of these meeting minutes.

Collins reported that she had done research the public library in Prairie du Chien regarding the Revolutionary War engagement that occurred on the Mississippi River near the mouth of the Turkey River in southeast Clayton County. The British prevented “12 men and a rebel Commissary” from shipping a load of furs and whiskey to St. Louis anticipating that sale of the goods would fund American resistance. Charles Graitot was one of these traders. The CCHPC proposes to erect a brass plaque (compatible in design with National Park Service plaques) near the site for the Celebrate America 250 event.

Thomas reported that the 13-star flag at the George Meier Rural Heritage Museum in Elkader that was at the Moody Ridge School near Giard, Iowa is believed to have been flown during the War of 1812. James Moody was a veteran of that war. His father was a veteran of the Revolutionary War. James Moody was granted some 1800 acres in Clayton County as a reward for his military service. Meyer suggested that the flag may have come from Ohio, where the Moodys had lived before coming to Iowa.

Emily Sadewasser was invited by the Northeast Iowa Vietnam Veterans (NEIVV) to discuss ideas for funding long-term care of the planned Vietnam memorial at Giard. Sadewasser commented that the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque had previously assisted veterans with the Moving Memorial and with the Memorial Rock in Guttenberg. Mason wanted to ensure the Giard United Methodist Church, which owns the proposed wayside property, that the veterans would provide continued funding for care of the site.

Sadewasser said that after the project was completed, the Foundation could create an endowment for care of the property. The Foundation can have someone receive donations. The Foundation can provide training to the veterans for how to solicit donations, help locate grant sources, review grant applications, and create a brochure about the project and an online site for donations. The Foundation charges a 5% fee for gifts received through their organization. She noted that a grant of up to \$2,000 was potentially available through the Clayton County Foundation for the Future. The veterans plan to use the landscape planning materials provided by ISU to create a brochure and other project promotion materials.

Mason said that the NEIVV would like to change the name of the wayside memorial to the “Giard NE Iowa Veterans Vietnam Memorial Park”. He felt that this more clearly identified the purpose of the wayside memorial. Clark commented that they thought the name change would help with fundraising. Koether said that they would need the approval of the Church board for the change from the previously proposed “Giard Memorial Wayside”.

Mason reported that the City of Marquette approved the plan to move the Basil Giard historic marker sign from its current location to the new wayside. Thomas had previously reported that the Iowa State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) also are okay with moving the sign.

Schmeltzer commented that a landscape plan needed to be completed so that the locations for underground utilities, drainage, and parking were determined prior to landscaping activities, including considerable fill. The veterans need to coordinate with the Boy Scouts of America, who will be leading the next phase of

the Basil Giard memorial, to develop the landscape plans. Koether noted that her granddaughter, Charlotte Koether, would be taking on the next phase as an Eagle Scout project, but that this might not occur for another year or more.

Mason stated that the veterans would like to trim the oak trees at the east side of the property and place the concrete vault restroom in that area.

Koether said that the Church would like to coordinate with the veterans regarding creating an easement to the property.

Thomas stated that the NE Iowa RC & D might be able to help with applying for a grant as an Iowa Byways project. He said that he has made the Iowa Byways Commission aware of the project.

Thomas also commented that he had contacted the Iowa State Historic Preservation Office for guidance regarding the project. SHPO will contact Brennan Doyle (Cultural Resources coordinator) at the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT). Thomas also is coordinating with Casey Stickford at the Clayton County Roads Department to devise a plan for obtaining the limestone from the keystone culvert on Drumlin Road.

The next scheduled meeting will be February 13, 2026.

Collins made a motion to adjourn and Schoen seconded it. The motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted January 20, 2026.

Chris Schoen, Secretary.

Clayton County Historic Preservation Commission
2026 CLG Work Plan

1. Meet all State Certified Local Government criteria
2. Submit year end CLG report
3. Report yearly commission activities to county board of supervisors
4. Declare May as Preservation Month
5. Attend Preserve Iowa Summit on June 2 and 3 in Ankeny IA
6. Attend any preservation workshop available in the region
7. Assist in promoting county museums through the Museum Crawl
8. Continue the development of the Giard Memorial Park
9. Work with Monona Eagle Scouts to continue the Basil Giard Tract story
10. Develop a story or event about the War of 1812 in Clayton County to Celebrate America 250
11. Continue to improve and update the Clayton County Stone Structure website
12. Continue to develop the Clayton County community founders' plaques
13. Hold preservation meetings at county museums
14. Review any Section 106 requests
15. Assist with National Historic Registry nominations
16. Provide guidance on National Registry guidelines
17. Work with CCPCC-Clayton County Pioneer Cemetery Commission to publicize their event of recognizing either a Revolutionary War event or a War of 1812 burial in the county.
18. Assist and pen any grant proposals
19. Assist County Auditor with commission's fiscal year budget
20. Organize a tour of county churches to promote their preservation