

IOWA PLANNING



American Planning Association
Iowa Chapter
Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the Iowa Chapter of the American Planning Association

November 2010

In this issue...

2010 State Fair Photography.....	1
2010 Iowa Annual Conference.....	2
2010 Conference Poster Winner.....	3
APA By-Law Amendments.....	3
Iowa Chapter Awarded APA Grant.....	4
Iowa Smart Planning Task Force Update.....	5
Iowa State Capitol Complex Master Plan.....	5
Sioux City's Jones Street Neighborhood.....	6
Davenport's Smart Transportation Plan.....	7
Rebuilding America.....	8
Cedar Falls Adopts New Floodplain Requirements.....	8
Program Renovates Homes in Iowa City.....	9
Fort Des Moines National Historic Landmark Preservation Plan.....	10

2010 State Fair Photography

Submitted by Naomi Hamlett, AICP

For the second year, APA-Iowa sponsored a photo category at the 2010 Iowa State Fair Photography Salon. The category we sponsored was "USA Places." This was a unique way to educate the public about planning through our common work in creating and showcasing places. Over 4,800 photos were entered into the 2010 Iowa State Fair Photography Salon.

Of the 291 photos entered in the "USA Places" category, 31 were chosen for exhibition, and six ribbons were awarded. The first, second, and third prize are displayed.



Submit your articles now! If you have any articles for the January edition of Iowa Planning, email them to cmiller@midascog.net





2010 Iowa Annual Conference

Submitted by David Wilwerding, AICP, President APA Iowa

On October 27-29th, nearly 180 planners and planning professionals attended the 2010 APA Iowa Annual Conference, held at the MidAmerica Center in Council Bluffs. Conference attendees enjoyed many highlights including:

- Rebuilding America Town Hall Meeting – see article on page 8 for additional information.
- 2010 APA Iowa Awards Presentation to six worthy projects/individuals.
- A humorous and thought provoking keynote address from Eric Corey Freed from organicARCHITECT.
- Four mobile tours highlighting the exciting changes occurring in the Council Bluffs/Omaha metro area, including tours of the Aksarben Village in Omaha, Brownfield Redevelopment Tour, Downtown Redevelopment Tour and a Bike Tour.
- Twenty-four concurrent sessions covering a wide range of topics.
- A reception held at the Union Pacific Museum located in the former Carnegie Library.
- A panel discussion on the Iowa Smart Planning legislation and Task Force – see article on page 5 for additional information.

I would like to personally thank the following individuals who made the 2010 APA Iowa Conference successful, they each spent countless hours working on all of the fine details needed for a conference:

- APA Iowa Conference Sponsors who are all represented in the graphic below.
- APA Nebraska for their assistance with the conference and the Rebuilding America Task Force.
- The 2010 Conference Planning Committee – Rose Brown, City of Council Bluffs; Bob Gibson, Civil Design Advantage; Naomi Hamlett, City of West Des Moines; Eric Jensen, City of Ankeny; Erik Lundy, City of Des Moines; Gayle Malmquist, City of Council Bluffs; Keith Marvin, Marvin Planning Consultants; Derek Miller, City of Omaha; Rich Russell, City of Dubuque; Chris Shires, City of West Des Moines; Mark Stursma, City of Papillion; and Bret Vandelune, Polk County.
- A special thank you to the City of Council Bluffs, their staff and the MidAmerica Center for hosting this year’s conference.

Thanks to efforts of the MidAmerica Center, Rose Brown and Gayle Malmquist all leftover food from the conference was donated to a local women’s and children’s shelter. Planning for the 2011 Upper Midwest Conference *Motate* hosted by APA Iowa is already underway. The event will be held October 19-21, 2011 in Davenport.



2010 Conference

Student Poster Contest Winner

Submitted by Naomi Hamlett

Written by Jill Wanderscheid, AICP



The Student Poster Contest was held again this year with great success! After a review by the 2010 Award jury, comprised of Jill Wanderscheid AICP, Brent Nelson, AICP, Paul Barnes, AICP, Kellee Van Bruggen, and Riley Simpson, AICP, a first place winner was chosen. This year, APA - Iowa is pleased to announce that MaryGrace Weber and Lorin Ditzler, both M.S. Candidates in Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Iowa, won the first place prize of \$750! Their poster, entitled “A Vision for Economic Development: Xicotepec, Mexico”, focuses on planning for economic development success in this mid-sized Mexican city. The poster was displayed at the annual conference in Council Bluffs. Congratulations MaryGrace and Lorin!



2010 Student Poster Contest Winner

APA Iowa By-Law Amendments

*Submitted by David Wilwerding, AICP,
President APA Iowa*

At the APA Iowa Annual Conference, the Election Teller Committee, consisting of Eric Jensen, City of Ankeny; Naomi Hamlett, City of West Des Moines and Bret Vandelune, Polk County reported that 73 election ballots were returned and the APA Iowa Membership overwhelmingly approved all proposed changes to the APA Iowa By-Laws. The full text of the By-Laws are available on the APA Iowa website at <http://www.iowa-apa.org/about-apa-iowa.html>. In summary, the By-Law amendments included the following changes:

- Conversion of the President-Elect position to a Vice President Position. This would allow a president, should they choose to run for a second term in office as the other Officer positions are allowed to do. This change takes effect in March

2012 with the next regular election cycle.

- Addition of two new Board positions, one each for a faculty member of the University of Iowa and Iowa State University planning programs. With this change the student representatives from each of the universities will become non-voting liaison members.
- Addition of an At-Large Board position, increasing the number to three total.
- Addition of a non-voting liaison position which would be appointed by the Iowa County Zoning Officials (COZO).
- Allows for the use of electronic voting for future elections, in lieu of the mailed ballots.
- Other minor changes throughout.

The APA Iowa Board will be filling the new Board positions over the next few weeks. As always, should you have an interest in being involved in Chapter activities, please don't hesitate to contact APA Iowa President, David Wilwerding at dwilwerding@ci.johnston.ia.us.

Iowa Chapter Awarded APA Grant for Smart Planning Training

Submitted by Eric Jensen, AICP and Gary Taylor, AICP



In September 2010, the APA Iowa Chapter was awarded a \$3,100 grant by the American Planning Association's Chapter Presidents Council (CPC) to create and deliver a *smart planning training program for smaller and midsized communities*. The grant money will be combined with additional money and in-kind contributions from the APA Iowa Chapter and Iowa State University Extension to develop written bulletins and an educational workshop to be delivered in four to six locations across Iowa.

In April 2010 Governor Culver signed what has come to be known as the Iowa Smart Planning Law. The law sets forth ten smart planning principles that state agencies and local governments "shall consider and may apply" during "deliberation of all appropriate planning, zoning, development and resource management decisions," and identifies thirteen elements that local governments "may include" when developing or amending comprehensive plans. The Smart Planning Law for the first time places into state law planning enabling legislation, and provides a roadmap for what a quality local comprehensive plan should contain. Professional planners in Iowa have long promoted the benefits of comprehensive planning, and planning best practices, to local elected officials, planning commissioners and zoning boards of adjustment. Now these practices are supported in state legislation.

Many of the smart planning principles find their genesis in the Smart Growth movement; however, Iowa's Smart Planning principles focus less on the *urban* built environment, and more broadly on contemporary and rural planning issues facing Midwestern and High Plains states like Iowa. Unfortunately most of literature and training materials that exist today utilize a Smart Growth framework designed for urban and metropolitan communities, or rural communities that are rapidly growing because they are in an area rich in natural amenities or in close proximity to a metropolitan area. Iowa has 948 cities, only 11 of which have a population greater than 50,000. The vast majority of these 948 cities are either slow-growing or declining in population. The term "Smart Planning" (as opposed to Smart Growth) – and the Smart Planning principles themselves – were specifically chosen in the drafting of the Iowa legislation to stress that planning can be effectively utilized by *all* Iowa cities, not just large or rapidly growing communities. The objective of the grant is to develop educational materials that illustrate how smart planning can be effectively practiced in those "other" communities that, in fact, make up the majority of Iowa communities.

One of the strengths of the grant application recognized by the CPC is its transferability to small cities and rural communities nationwide. The final products of the grant – the educational bulletins and workshop training materials - will be shared with APA National, to be used as the basis of similar programs by other state APA chapters.

Work on the program will begin immediately. An advisory group consisting of APA Iowa planners, local elected and appointed officials from small and midsized communities, and professional association (i.e. Iowa League of Cities and ISAC) representatives will be assembled to help develop the program. The program materials will then be created and assembled and the program will be delivered in four to six training sessions in different locations across Iowa in the Spring/Summer 2011.

For more information on this program contact the grant authors, Eric Jensen (ejensen@ankeniowa.gov) or Gary Taylor (gtaylor@iastate.edu).



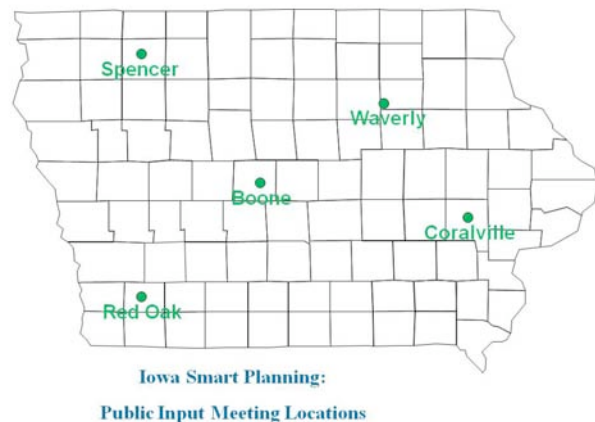
Iowa Smart Planning Task Force Update

Submitted by Aaron Todd, Rebuild Iowa Office

The Iowa Smart Planning Task Force has been busy researching, evaluating and discussing various community and regional planning policy proposals throughout the summer and fall. Draft recommendations were approved for public comment during the Task Force's meeting on September 15, along with an ambitious public input process. The recommendations were grouped into five primary categories: state-level coordination, regional planning, financial and technical assistance, watershed planning, and state code clean-up.

The Task Force established multiple opportunities for public comment: public input meetings were held in five communities across the state between September 28 and October 7, a webinar was hosted by the Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC) on October 6, a survey was distributed, and a letter and email submission process was established. The Rebuild Iowa Office issued a press release on September 16 and Task Force member organizations, including the American Planning Association – Iowa Chapter (APA-Iowa), ISAC, and Iowa League of Cities, contacted their constituents to inform them of the public input opportunities.

A total of 206 persons participated in the public input meetings and webinar. Fifty-eight persons and organizations submitted surveys, and six letters and 20 emails were submitted through October 10. Additionally, the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization also issued a survey to garner more feedback from Central Iowa. In general, the draft recommendations were positively received, and many constructive comments were submitted. You can review the draft recommendations, all of the comments submitted, survey results, and an analysis of common themes identified throughout the public comments here: http://rio.iowa.gov/smart_planning/input.html.



The Task Force held its fourth meeting on October 20 to review the public comments and make revisions to the draft recommendations based on those comments and met on November 10 to finalize the recommendation. The first report due was sent to the Governor and General Assembly on November 15 and is available at:

http://www.rio.iowa.gov/resources/reports/2010-11_Smart_Planning_Task_Force_Report.pdf.

More information about the work of the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force, including meeting notes and reference materials, can be found here: http://www.rio.iowa.gov/smart_planning/task_force.html. The Iowa Smart Planning Task Force exists in state code through December 2012; it is hoped that all interested planners will engage in this dialogue, provide input into the process, and ensure that a stronger planning culture continues to grow in Iowa!

Iowa State Capitol Complex Master Plan

Submitted by Jessica Ibanez, AICP

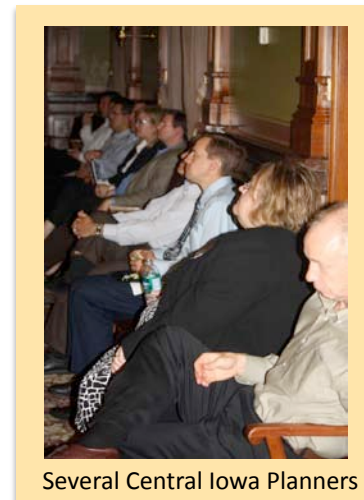


Matt Carlile of Confluence

On September 29, 2010, thirty-five (35) central Iowa planners gathered at the State Capitol building to learn about the Iowa State Capitol Complex Master Plan. Brian Clark and Matt Carlile, of Confluence Landscape Architecture and Planning, spoke about the planning process that led to the adoption of this master plan which provides the framework of expansion and development of the state capitol grounds. Dean Ibsen and Nick Smith, Vertical Infrastructure Program Planners for the State of Iowa, gave their perspective on the use and implementation of the plan. Thank you to all of the speakers for volunteering your time to support our continuing education! If you would like to present at an upcoming lunch or have an idea for a topic you'd like to hear more about, please contact Jessica Ibanez (jessica.ibanez@wdm-ia.com) or Ryan Moffatt (rlmoffatt@dm.gov).



The group gathered at the State Capitol Building.



Several Central Iowa Planners

Sioux City's Jones Street Neighborhood is Bustling with Activity

Written by Paul Barnes

With contributions by Louie Simpson, Jill Wanderscheid and Chris Madsen

The Jones Street Neighborhood in Sioux City is considered one of the most diverse neighborhoods in Sioux City. The district was once known as the Jones Triangle due to its boundary shape, but now encompasses approximately 15 uniquely shaped city blocks. The City of Sioux City identified this neighborhood as an area of need and designated this district as an Urban Renewal Area in 2004 in order to focus and infuse federal entitlement funds.

(Continued on Page 13)

Davenport's Smart Transportation Plan

Submitted by Matt Flynn, AICP

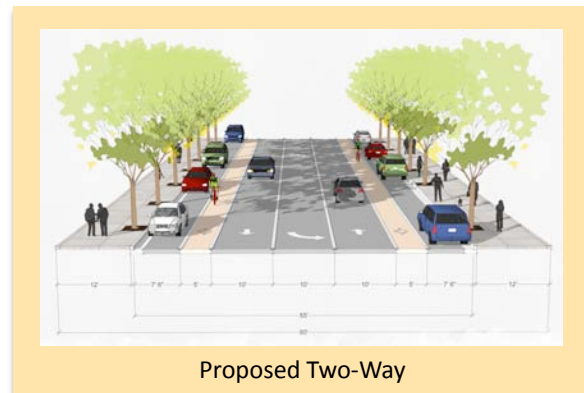
Written by Jeff Ignatius, Managing Editor, River Cities' Reader



In an interview promoting his 2007 lecture at the Figge Art Museum, urban planner Jeff Speck promised that his ideas would be "controversial." He explained to me that "most cities, for better or for worse, are being designed by their public-works departments, who state as the highest objective the free flow of automobiles."

Three years later, the City of Davenport is on the cusp of approving a 10-year comprehensive transportation plan called "Davenport in Motion" that draws from the philosophy Speck promotes. The shock is that it's barely controversial at all.

Highlights include returning Third, Fourth, Brady, and Harrison streets to two-way automobile traffic, adding bike lanes and other pavement markings to create a citywide network of cyclist-friendly routes, altering roadways "to ensure safe vehicle travel speeds and mobility for all travel modes" (including foot traffic), and optimizing the downtown-parking situation. It also addresses two areas this article won't: restructuring CitiBus to achieve "significant improvements in efficiency and service quality (frequency and hours of service)," and a plan for northwest Davenport.



Davenport in Motion is more than 900 pages long (costing the city \$330,110), but its overarching goal can be boiled down to this bit from its introduction: "a transportation system that is multi-modal, interconnected, and supportive of a pedestrian-friendly urban community where residents can access daily needs and activities by foot, bike, or transit." (Download links for the plan can be found at RCReader.com/y/motion. To read an article previewing Speck's 2007 speech, go to RCReader.com/y/speck.)

Davenport in Motion is no panacea, and there are roadblocks. The plan doesn't include an overall price tag, and it of course still needs to be implemented. The downtown-parking element remains problematic, as Davenport's surfeit of parking makes it difficult to encourage through scarcity modes of transportation beyond the automobile. Because Brady and Harrison are part of U.S. 61, changing them to two-way streets would require approval beyond the city council. And transportation is just one element of urban planning.

But the plan is tangible evidence that Davenport has taken Speck's criticism to heart. The free flow of automobiles is no longer Davenport's primary transportation objective. *(Article continued online: <http://www.rcreader.com/news/davenports-smart-transportation-plan/>)*

This article originally appeared in the River Cities' Reader (RiverCitiesReader.com), the alternative newspaper of the Quad Cities of Iowa and Illinois.



Rebuilding America

Submitted by David Wilwerding, AICP, President APA Iowa

APA Iowa and APA Nebraska co-sponsored a Town Hall Meeting in conjunction with the APA Iowa Annual Conference on October 27, 2010 in Council Bluffs, IA.

Rebuilding America is an initiative working to engage planners, transportation experts, policy makers and engaged citizens in a national conversation about how to address our infrastructure crisis and increase investment in building communities of lasting value. The report evaluated current conditions and challenges affecting the nation's vital infrastructure, develop a new vision for the nation's infrastructure, and identify specific recommendations for changes in public policy, funding, and planning practice needed to meet the infrastructure needs of the 21st century. This work lays out a blueprint for action needed to increase and improve performance, competitiveness, community quality of life, citizen choice, equity, and efficiency.

The intent of the town hall meetings across the country is to engage planners, local leaders, and allied professionals about infrastructure issues and implementation policy and practice recommendations. At the APA Iowa and APA Nebraska joint event Bruce Knight, FAICP, President of the American Planning Association (APA), moderated the event. Panelists included Lynnae Hentzen, Executive Director of the Center on Sustainable Communities (COSC), Marty Grate, Environmental Services Manager for the City of Omaha, NE, Barry Cleaveland, Commissioner of the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT), Joseph Cassis, Deputy Director of the Iowa Communications Network (ICN) and Paul Mullen, Executive Director of the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA). APA Iowa extends our appreciation to all of the panelists who provided an insightful overview of the infrastructure needs of Iowa and Nebraska.

Over 50 people attended the meeting, and engaged in discussion and provided feedback on the Rebuilding America report; a summary of all comments has been forwarded onto APA National and is available on the APA Iowa website, www.iowa-apa.org. For more information on the Rebuilding America initiative the full report is available at:

<http://www.planning.org/policy/infrastructure/>.

Cedar Falls Adopts New Flood Plain Requirements

Submitted by Martin Ryan

The City of Cedar Falls gained some recognition during 2010 with adoption of revised Flood Plain regulations in December 2009. The City was affected by the June 2008 Cedar River flooding, which reached unprecedented flood levels. Prior to 2008 the City had not experienced a "100-year" (1% probability) flood on the Cedar River, although popular opinion assumes that river flood events in 1993 and 1999 achieved the "100-year" flood level. Those prior floods were estimated to be "25-year" or "30-year" flood events. The 2008 flood not only achieved "100-year" flood elevations, but far exceeded those levels by at least 4 feet in many areas. Many homes that had been flood protected to the 100-yr plus 1-ft elevation standard had 4 feet of water on their main floors. While no "official" designation has been assigned to the event, we have commonly accepted the idea that a "500-year" (.2% probability) flood likely occurred. The event also clearly illustrated that the "100-year" flood protection level can no longer be relied upon as a "safe" elevation / protection standard. The flood affected a large river floodplain area in the northern portions of the City ("North Cedar") where up to 500 residences were affected including several mobile home parks along with numerous businesses.

(Continued on page 15)

Program Renovates Homes in Iowa City

Submitted by Rebecca Raab

Residents of Iowa City have always been proud of the city's unique mix of people, housing, and job opportunities in the neighborhoods near the University of Iowa and downtown. Long term residents and students live side-by-side and interact on a daily basis. Ensuring a healthy balance of different types and prices of housing is important in maintaining these neighborhoods as vital, safe, affordable, and attractive places to live and work for both renters and homeowners.

A new program called the **UniverCity Neighborhood Partnership**, administered jointly by the University of Iowa and the City of Iowa City, attempts to do just this. Using low-interest loans from local lenders, the City will purchase twenty-five homes in designated areas where the balance of owner-occupied housing and rental housing is assessed as being unstable. A \$1.25 million I-JOBS grant funds up to \$50,000 of renovation for each home. Once renovation is complete, the homes are sold to income-qualified applicants. If the owner remains in the home for at least five years or sells the home to an income-approved candidate, the renovation cost is forgiven making owning a well-located, recently-renovated home more affordable. Additionally, the University of Iowa offers downpayment assistance to its permanent employees of \$5,000 or 5% of the purchase price, whichever is greater, making homes even more affordable to those who work nearby.

Potential homes are assessed by a housing rehabilitation specialist employed by the City who determines if the home can be renovated within budget. Houses eligible for purchase are then reviewed by a committee made up of University staff, realtors, bankers, affordable housing advocates, historic preservation advocates and other members of the public to ensure they are a good fit. Nine homes have been purchased so far by the program and three have completed renovation. Houses are priced from \$60,000 to \$180,000 and located in a variety of neighborhoods, four near the westside University campus and five near the eastside campus and downtown.

For more information about the program contact the Community Development Department at the City of Iowa City via phone 319.356.5231 or email rebecca-raab@iowa-city.org.



Photo by Rebecca Raab

517 S. Governor St, one of the homes purchased and renovated by the UniverCity Neighborhood Partnership program

Fort Des Moines National Historic Landmark Historic Preservation Plan

Submitted by Mindy Moore, AICP



Located at the southeast corner of Army Post Road and Southwest 9th Street, the Fort Des Moines National Historic Landmark is a valuable asset to the City of Des Moines as well as the entire Country for its significance in black history, women’s history, and military history. During WWI, Fort Des Moines served as the Provisional Army Officer Training School —the U.S. Army's first school for black officers. During WWII, Fort Des Moines was the birthplace of the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps, later renamed the Women's Army Corps, which trained over 72,000 women, including 3,069 officers —the first women officers in the Army at any level.



Since WWII, the Army has disposed of major portions of the original 640 acre tract, reducing it to approximately 170 acres; only 43 of the nearly 350 original buildings remain. While some of the buildings have been repurposed and maintained over the years, others are suffering from significant deterioration. Due to the risk of further loss, the Park and Recreation Department received funding from the State Historic Preservation Office and the National Trust for Historic Preservation to help hire Keffer/Overton Architects and Genus Landscape Architecture to prepare a Historic Preservation Plan for the Fort.



The consultant team worked with a planning committee to complete a Plan that guides preservation and rehabilitation efforts for 35 of the remaining buildings and associated landscape. The

planning committee consisted of property owners, neighborhood representatives, the State Historic Preservation Office, and City staff from Parks and Recreation, Community Development, Economic Development, and Engineering. It was very

important that the planning committee accurately represent all of the stakeholders, interested parties, City departments, and the State Historic Preservation Office, so that we could appropriately address the multi-faceted aspects this large and complicated project. Input

and expertise of the planning committee was just as vital as that of the consultants. Throughout the year-long process, the committee held five meetings, including a public input meeting. The planning process helped to bring awareness of the Fort's significance and historical and cultural value to the City Council, city staff, and recommending boards and commissions as well as the public that attended

or watched the televised meetings, or read articles in the newspaper.

The consultant team was tasked with the following scope of work:

1. Review of existing assessments of historic significance of each building, features of the site, and cultural landscape with updates as needed;
2. Assessment of physical and structural condition and integrity of buildings, infrastructure, and features of the site;
3. Identification of preservation, rehabilitation, and mothballing efforts necessary;

(Continued on Page 11)

Fort Des Moines National Historic Landmark Historic Preservation Plan

Submitted by Mindy Moore, AICP

(Continued from Page 10)



4. Priority schedule of preservation and rehabilitation work;
5. Estimated cost of preservation and rehabilitation efforts;
6. Recommendations for adaptive reuse and connections among the features of the site; and
7. Recommendations for easements or other legal tools to ensure ongoing preservation.

Design Guidelines – Design guidelines would help to provide enforceable area guidelines for redevelopment that a developer could follow, which would be acceptable by the State Historic Preservation Office and the City, while also providing oversight to ensure appropriate redevelopment in the area.

The resulting Plan includes a historical narrative, building and landscape assessments, recommendations, cost estimates, and requirements for work. General recommendations resulting from this study include:

Rehabilitation of Landscape and Buildings – Rehabilitation allows for adaptive reuse of land and buildings to meet current needs, while preserving those portion or features which convey historical, cultural, or architectural values.

Land Use Protection Areas – The Consultant team identified three separate areas for the purpose of determining future land use and development opportunities. These include areas of 1) highest integrity, 2) moderate integrity, and 3) lowest integrity. A map is included for your reference. The level of flexibility in terms of use and construction would vary from strict to lenient depending upon the degree of integrity.

Appropriate new uses – Successful rehabilitation efforts for other historic forts across the country have relied on one or a small group of dedicated entities to lead the way. This could be college or business campuses, larger scale residential housing providers, and civic groups.

Marketing and Image – A strong identity and marketing strategy will in part determine the ultimate success of rehabilitation efforts at Fort Des Moines. Joint marketing was a recommendation of the SuperBlock Master Plan and continues to be a recommendation of the Fort Des Moines National Historic Landmark Historic Preservation Plan.

Fort Des Moines Cultural District – An advisory committee should be set up to oversee development and programming of a Cultural District. The group would act as an advocacy association of stakeholders and could be extended to representatives of the State Historic Preservation Office, local officials, and area community members. The District would promote arts, entertainment, and a live-work-play environment.

Specific Recommendations for Buildings include:
Building Treatments -- Rehabilitation options include mothballing, rehabilitation of the building envelope, complete rehabilitation, and new addition and exterior alternations. The Plan provides a cost estimate for each of these options for each building.



(Continued on Page 12)

Fort Des Moines National Historic Landmark Historic Preservation Plan

Submitted by Mindy Moore, AICP

(Continued from Page 11)



Specific Recommendations for Buildings include:
Building Treatments -- Rehabilitation options include mothballing, rehabilitation of the building envelope, complete rehabilitation, and new addition and exterior alternations. The Plan provides a cost estimate for each of these options for each building.

New Building Uses and Development Opportunities -- New uses and development can build constituency for the site. Possible new uses include conference space for hosting an event of up to 500 people or developing a campus environment. Other ideas include residential uses, small business incubators, studio spaces for artist or other community oriented spaces.

Specific Recommendations for the Cultural Landscape include:

Circulation Patterns -- Maintain and enhance historic vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns along with their linear viewsheds. This includes lighting, utilities, landscaping, fences, signage, and parking areas.

Large Scale Vegetation Patterns - The Fort's

landscape was historically characterized by a mixture of lush canopy tree-lined streets and manicured turf lawns, with pasture to the south and west. The Plan sets forth recommendations for street trees, utilities, lawns, foundation plantings.

Stormwater Management Strategies -- Stormwater was historically managed in different ways

throughout the fort grounds from curb and gutter roads with storm intakes on primary roads to open swale along secondary roads. The Plan sets forth recommendations for where curb and gutter or bio swales or other green management techniques could be used.

Small Scale Site Features -- These include outbuildings and structures such as sheds and garages, artillery guns, flag poles, fences and other non-habitable structures. The bandstand that was located along the Parade Grounds is recommended to be

reconstructed.

New Landscape Uses -- New uses of the landscape and open space include trail connections, low-impact sports fields, community gatherings, interpretive elements and signage, and removal

of chain-link fences with barbed wire.

Through the building and landscape assessments, cost estimates, and recommendations of this Plan, the needs and priorities of the Fort have been identified. This assists the City and other property owners to move forward with economic

development and planning tools to implement the Plan's recommendations.



Fort Des Moines facing northwest
Buildings 126 (quartermaster stable) & 127 (musical instrument maintenance shop)
November 2007
Photo by Mindy Moore



Fort Des Moines facing northeast
Buildings 59 & 55 (barracks)
January 22, 2009
Photo by Mindy Moore

Sioux City's Jones Street Neighborhood is Bustling with Activity

Written by Paul Barnes

Contributions by Louie Simpson, Jill Wanderscheid and Chris Madsen

(Continued from Page 6)



The City is active in this area and identified housing rehabilitation, public improvements, and neighborhood programs as activities for the neighborhood. Housing rehabilitation began in 2006 and has slowly gained momentum. To date we have completed 18 rehabilitations in the area with a total CDBG investment in excess of \$160,000.

According to the US Censuses, 42% of families within the Jones Street Neighborhood do not have personal transportation. Due to limited mobility, access to essential services is crucial for residents of this neighborhood. Among these essential services is access to healthy, inexpensive food.

In late 2008 a grocery store that was located near the Jones Street Neighborhood closed its doors. Staff quickly worked with the new owner of the building to plan for reopening a full-service grocery store to serve the neighborhood. Part of the commitment included \$200,000 Neighborhood Stabilization (NSP) Funds and City funds. Today the formerly vacant grocery store is undergoing a facelift. The new grocery store, known as Select Foods, is slated to open in 2011.

During the spring and summer of 2010, City staff also worked with Jones Street Neighborhood residents to develop a Community Garden. The intent of the garden was to provide residents additional healthy food options.

The project became more than just a place to grow fresh produce and unified members of the community. A total of 16 plots were constructed and planted during the inaugural year of the program, bringing together many families in the area. The first year was a huge success, providing fresh produce to the many families that participated. Staff has already received inquiries about next year's planting season!

(Continued on Page 14)

Jones Street Neighborhood Quick Facts:

- 47 % of the population is classified as minority
- 60% of the area is Low-Mod Income (at or below 80% AMI)
- 26% of the area is below poverty level
- 94% of the housing stock was built prior to 1978.
- 65% of the housing units in the area are rental; 35% are owner occupied



Sioux City's Jones Street Neighborhood is Bustling with Activity

Written by Paul Barnes

Contributions by Louie Simpson, Jill Wanderscheid and Chris Madsen

(Continued from Page 13)



Another focus of the Jones Street Neighborhood plan was to develop public improvements to benefit the residents. After holding strategic planning sessions with the neighborhood, it was agreed that the Dale Street Park should be redeveloped and upgraded. A brainstorming discussion ensued regarding park amenities; including a water feature, green space, basketball court, and updated playground equipment. Staff researched water features and found that rather than a pool-type feature, an alternative such as a splash pad would better fit this neighborhood park. The splash pad installed within this park became the first of its kind in Sioux City! Construction began with the demolition of a vacant home in January 2008 and ended with the grand opening in August, 2009. Not only does this enhanced park provide needed respite from summer heat, but the splash pad is also free to the public!



In addition to the public improvements in the area, the City works with the Midtown Family Community Center (MFCC). The facility is located at just west of the Jones Street Neighborhood and engages the neighborhood in activities and services. The City has partnered with MFCC on many youth and neighborhood projects including youth after school programs, summer youth camps, a GED Program, a food pantry, and many more services.

Midtown Family Community Center

Quick Facts:

- 4 Full or Part-Time Staff
- Countless Volunteers
- 50 Weekly Participants for Youth Night
- 150 Families Served in September
- Food Pantry
- 21 Enrolled in the GED Program (English/Spanish)
- Visit www.midtownfamily.org for more details!

Staff is proud to work with the residents of the Jones Street Neighborhood and pleased with the level of success. However, more work continues throughout the neighborhood. Staff is currently at work prioritizing public improvements and housing development with the residents. New project ideas include a neighborhood entryway, street enhancements, and new construction / housing infill. Stay tuned for more success stories!



Cedar Falls Adopts New Flood Plain Regulations

Submitted by *Martin Ryan*

(Continued from Page 8)



Following the flood event North Cedar residents weighed in upon the City Council and City officials to take positive actions to help alleviate the immediate and future flood impacts. The City took a number of immediate steps including clean-up activities, participation in the FEMA-sponsored flood buy-out program (nearly 200 residential flood plain properties will be bought out in addition to the 180 properties acquired in the 1990s and early 2000s) and relocation of several businesses including funding to develop an industrial park in the North Cedar area outside of the floodplain. The new industrial park is currently under construction. A grain storage elevator company will move out to the new industrial park early next year. We have also undertaken preparation of a North Cedar redevelopment plan for the future (currently reaching its final stages). This plan (prepared by Bonestroo Inc.) will reconfigure the land use plan and make other development recommendations for the area. A controversial activity taken shortly after the flood event was a strong stance on reconstruction of “substantially damaged” structures in the “floodway” (areas adjacent to rivers or streams, which are most prone to flood events). We determined that any substantially damaged residences in the floodway could not be reconstructed or repaired without a variance by the Board of Adjustment due to the nonconforming nature of residential structures in the floodway. City staff recommended denial of all such variances; however the Board of Adjustment approved nearly all of those variance requests from a number of floodway residential property owners.

North Cedar residents also were strong advocates for re-examining the flood plain boundaries and flood plain regulations. The City had already undertaken flood plain map re-study and map revisions in 2004 / 2005, although FEMA has not yet formally adopted the new maps. Nevertheless we have utilized the new flood plain maps and elevation data since 2008 to establish current boundaries and new building elevations. This “active use” of new floodplain data, even if not yet adopted, is recommended by FEMA. Residents were primarily concerned with filling activities in the general floodplain, which seemed to be poorly controlled. These activities are commonly associated with efforts to have properties “removed” from the floodplain through FEMA-approved Letters of Map Revision (LOMR) process. Many felt that some filling activities contributed directly to specific building site damages to nearby properties during the flood event.

City staff reviewed the flood plain ordinance and developed a number of new provisions, which we expected could be very controversial. The main elements of the new ordinance include the following:

1. Adoption of the 500-year (.2% probability) flood plain boundaries and flood elevations as the new “minimum” flood protection standard. This means that all properties within the 100-year and 500-year flood plain area are regulated.
2. No new building lots can be established or “platted” in the 500-year flood plain. If lots were created prior to January 1, 2010, development can occur on those flood plain “lots of record”. This provision has been added to a Subdivision Ordinance amendment.
3. Filling limitations of no more than 3-ft of fill can be placed in the 500-yr floodplain and no more than 1/3 of a parcel can be filled.
4. FEMA- approved LOMRs (Letter of Map Revision) are prohibited. We will still allow Letters of Map Amendments (“LOMAs”), which represent map boundary “corrections”.
5. Limitations on the allowable size of detached accessory structures (576 sq ft or 2-stall garage) before necessitating elevation of the structure to the 500-year flood protection level. *(Continued on Page 16)*

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Cedar Falls Adopts New Flood Plain Regulations



Submitted by Martin Ryan
(Continued from Page 15)

The Ordinance was endorsed by North Cedar residents and the City Council. City Council member Kamyar Enshayan has been a strong advocate of strict flood plain regulations. The larger community, including those persons living outside the floodplain also support these changes. There have been very few public objections to the new regulations. Iowa DNR staff have no objections to the major new provisions of the Ordinance. However, a few minor corrections are needed to ensure the language conforms completely with minimum FEMA standards. City staff attempted to “improve” some sections of the standard flood plain ordinance that sometimes cause confusion. These corrections are expected to be completed by the end of 2010.

The City Council also formed a floodplain advisory task force, which consists of persons representing a number of interests. The task force, which is chaired by a City Council member, has met monthly most of this year with the purpose of evaluating how the new flood plain regulations are working. There have been no major issues or suggested revisions to date.

As the year has progressed with very few significant issues arising, we are gaining more confidence that the new code provisions are becoming accepted in the community.