

**CITY OF CHATFIELD HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**AGENDA**

**City Council Chambers - 21 SE Second Street, Chatfield, MN 55923**  
**April 7, 2025, 6:00 P.M.**

A. Minutes

1. [Call to Order](#)
2. [March 3, 2025, Meeting Minutes](#)  
Motion to Approve
3. [Approve the agenda](#)

B. Continued Business

1. [Review ordinance for commission member seat\(s\).](#)  
Motion to approve recommendation.
2. [Haven Wall](#)

C. New Business

1. [Review Heritage Preservation Poster- Robert Vogel](#)  
Motion to approve.
2. [Updating Mural](#)



HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING STAFF  
REPORT

Meeting Date: April 7, 2025

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**Agenda Item:** Call to Order

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**Subject | Summary:**

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**Agenda Category:**

**Submitted By:** Alison Bentley

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**Recommended Motion:**

---

**Community Engagement and Outreach:**

---

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

**Amount:**

**Ongoing Cost :**

**One-Time Cost :**

**Included in Current Budget?:**

---

**FISCAL DETAILS:**

**Fund Name(s) (Operations | Capital):**

**Account Code:**

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**Background:**

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**Attachments:**



# HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING STAFF REPORT

**Meeting Date:** April 7, 2025

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**Agenda Item:** March 3, 2025, Meeting Minutes

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**Agenda Category:**

**Submitted By:** Alison Bentley

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**Recommended Motion:** Motion to Approve

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[2025 3.3 Meeting Minutes.pdf](#)



***Heritage Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes  
Council Chambers, Thurber Building, 21 Second Street SE  
March 3, 2025 at 6:00 P.M***

**Members Present:** Councilor Pam Bluhm, Ruth Ann Lund, and Ben Frederichs

**Others:** Alison Bentley, Community Development Director and Michele Peterson, City Administrator

**Member Absent:** None

- I. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Frederichs at 6:00pm.
- II. **Approve the Agenda:** The agenda was approved by consent.
- III. **Approve minutes of January 23:** A motion was made by Bluhm to approve the minutes presented with a second by Lund. Motion carried with all in favor.
- IV. **Continued Business:**
  - a. Review the Heritage Preservation Commission ordinance with consideration to amendments.
    - i. A motion was made to update section 1.05.Subd.1.a
      - 1. A minimum of three up to seven...
    - ii. A motion was made to update section 1.05.Subd.2.
      - 1. Update terms if only three people Frederichs 2025-2028, Lund 2025-2027, Bluhm 2026
- V. **Election of Officers**
  - a. President – Ben Frederichs
  - b. Vice President- Ruth Ann Lund
    - i. Motion made by Bluhm. All in favor
- VI. **Future Topics**
  - a. Preservation Month- May
    - i. Reach out to Robert Vogel's daughter that we would like to honor him
    - ii. Check on plaque design/ order
    - iii. Talk with Kay Wangen on creating a poster
    - iv. Award at the May city council meetin

VII. **Next Meeting: April 7, 2025 Agenda topics**

- a. Revisit Haven Wall (Widseth design)
- b. Commission ordinance draft review
- c. Historical Marker restoration (South Hwy 52.)

VIII. **Adjournment:** A motion was made by Lund to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 pm with a second by Frederichs. Motion carried all in favor.



HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING STAFF  
REPORT

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**Agenda Item:** Approve the agenda

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**Agenda Category:**

**Submitted By:** Alison Bentley

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**Recommended Motion:**

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**Community Engagement and Outreach:**

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**Agenda Item:** Review ordinance for commission member seat(s).

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**Subject | Summary:**

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**Agenda Category:**

**Submitted By:** Alison Bentley

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**Recommended Motion:** Motion to approve recommendation.

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**Community Engagement and Outreach:**

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# HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING STAFF REPORT

**Meeting Date:** April 7, 2025

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**Agenda Item:** Haven Wall

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**Subject | Summary:**

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**Agenda Category:**

**Submitted By:** Alison Bentley

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**Recommended Motion:**

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**Community Engagement and Outreach:**

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**Attachments:**

[Gerlach Proposal - City of Chatfield.pdf](#)

[Haven Wall - Access, 3-1-24 Notes and Comments.pdf](#)

[18-257 Certificate of Survey.pdf](#)



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**PROPOSAL**

Dear City of Chatfield Council Members:

Fred and Deborah Gerlach are the current owners of the property on Winona Street commonly known as the George Haven House (or The Oaks). The rear of the property includes a wall that was constructed by George A. Haven (Deborah's father). This wall has become a landmark in Chatfield. The Gerlach's are currently planning for the future of the property and desire to ensure the longevity and maintenance of this wall. The Gerlach's propose and request the City accept ownership of the wall and real estate surrounding the wall. To provide for regular maintenance and upkeep, the Gerlach's would agree to deposit a sum of approximately \$50,000.00 in the Chosen Valley Community Foundation to be earmarked for the City to use as funds for wall maintenance. The Gerlach's plan to have the wall in generally good repair prior to any transfer to limit any initial wall maintenance following transfer.

If accepted, the Gerlach's would cause a survey to be completed with approximately 10 feet of real estate on all sides of the wall to be included in the transfer to allow proper access for maintenance (generally depicted on the below topographic). I am available to answer any questions you may have and discuss any concerns you may have regarding this proposal.

**HISTORY OF THE WALL:**

George A. Haven constructed the wall alongside Old Territorial Road from 1927 to 1964. It includes stones from the early Chatfield school building, stones from six continents, including exotic places like Antarctica, England, Hong Kong, Tasmania and most of the fifty states. It also includes the thighbone of a dinosaur from Montana and a baptismal font from the ruins of a church in Italy. (This information is included on the History section of the City of Chatfield website). For additional history, please see the attached excerpt from the Star Tribune from August 8, 1965.

Sincerely,



Lee Novotny



## A Wall That Took 37 Years to Build



George A. Haven, of Chatfield, Minn., stands beside wall he built at his home, using stones and bricks of geographic and historical significance.

Rochester Post-Bulletin Photo

BACK IN 1927, George A. Haven, of Chatfield, Minn., began the construction of a wall. It was not just an ordinary sort of wall. Not just any sort of building material went into it. To qualify for Haven's wall, a stone or piece of brick must have a pedigree.

While the wall was built basically of stone taken from a nearby quarry, one section of it is built with stone taken from the foundation of the Chatfield school building, which was erected in 1888 and demolished in 1963.

But incorporated with the ordinary building stones, at frequent intervals, are other stones—the stones with pedigrees. They come either from distant places or have some historical significance.

Among items which went into the wall were a stone from King Tut's tomb, another picked off the beach at the Sea of Galilee, another from the Great Wall of China, still another from the Parthenon at Athens.

Stones of local historical interest, such as one from the Chatfield Academy, dating back to 1858, and another from the United States Land Office, dating to 1856, went into the wall. Of wider, state significance, are stones from Fort Snelling, the Sibley House and the Alexander Faribault House.

Still other stones came from the battlefield at Gettysburg, Fort Sumter, Custer's massacre and many other fields of conflict.

In addition to stones connected with historical

areas or places, different types of stone are represented—obsidian from the Yellowstone, a piece of lava rock snatched from the top of Mt. Vesuvius, even the petrified thigh bone of a Montana dinosaur.

A series of small stones embedded in the cap which surmounts the wall represents a trip around the world—brought back from such places as Peru, the Fiji Islands, Turkey, Switzerland, Spain and Morocco.

The wall, which separates the Haven home, "The Oaks," from the highway running past it, is 245 feet long, running six to seven feet in height, of which two and a half feet are underground. The width at the bottom is 36 to 40 inches, the width at the top 18 inches. It is laid entirely without mortar except for the reinforced concrete capping and some special stones which are laid into the courses with cement.

Haven, who is president of the Root River State Bank, did all of the work himself except for the last 70 feet. With this section of the wall he was assisted by his fellow townsman, Richard Theel.

After 37 years, the wall was finally finished in 1964. As it now stands, it incorporates a good part of the history of the world. And in addition it also carries a family record—handprints, names and dates impressed in the mortar of the cap.

As a guide to visitors, Haven has had printed a pamphlet which locates the different stones of interest which are built into the wall.

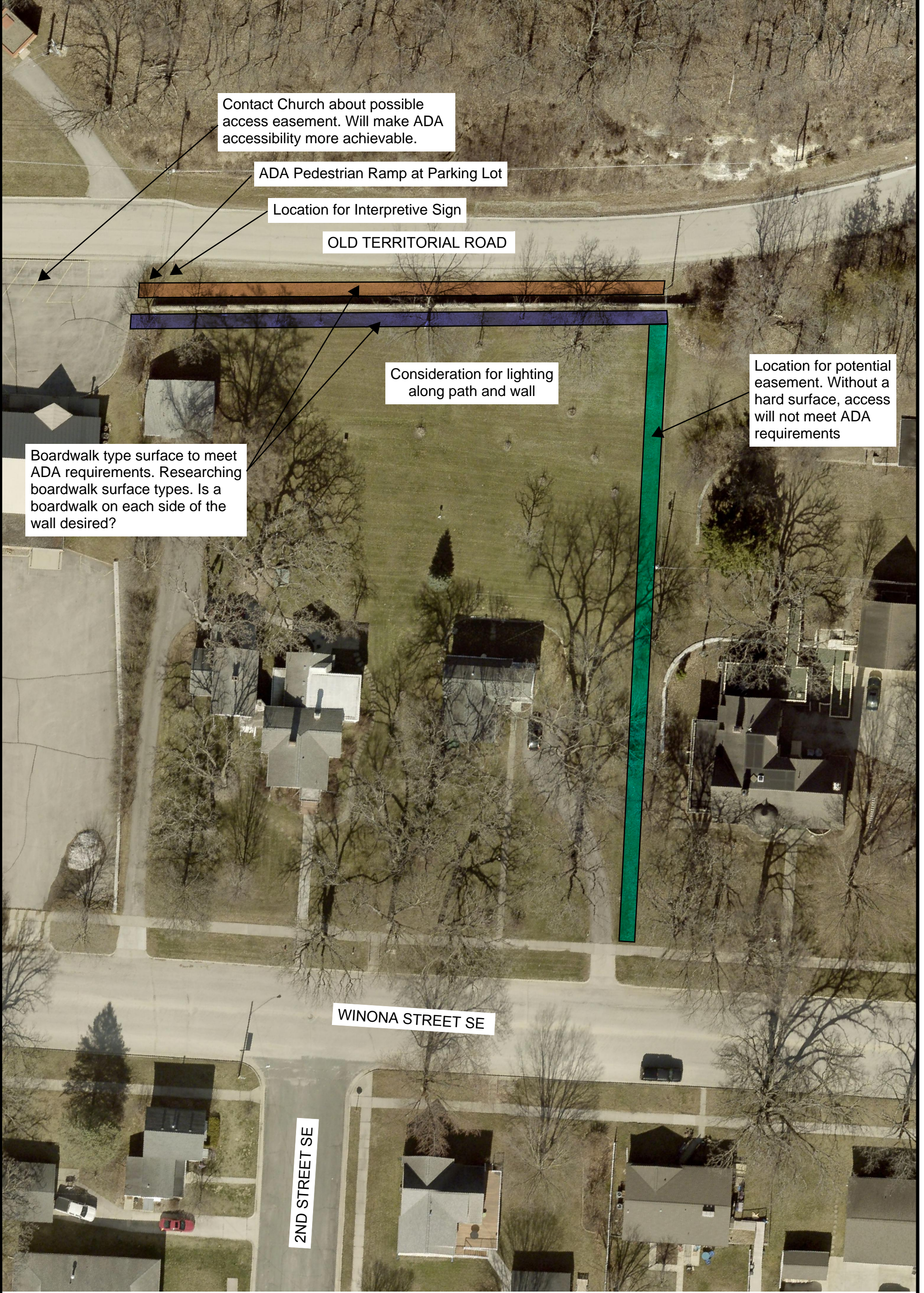


Richard Theel (left) helped Haven build a portion of the wall. The gate is made of heavy oak timbers taken from a house which was built about 1860 in Chatfield.

Continued



# HAVEN WALL ACCESS

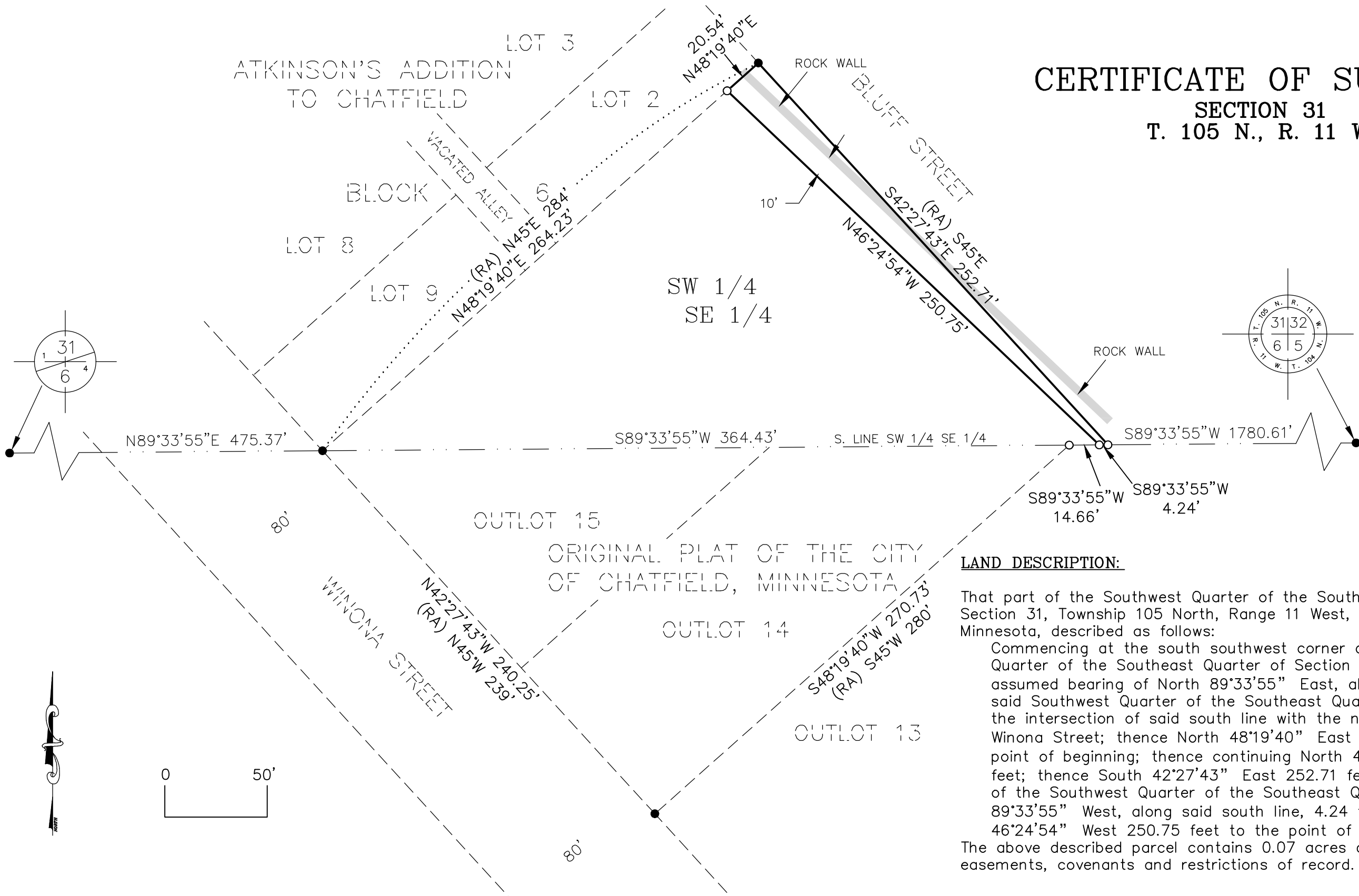


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CERTIFICATE OF SURVEY  
SECTION 31  
T. 105 N., R. 11 W.




LAND DESCRIPTION:

That part of the Southwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section 31, Township 105 North, Range 11 West, Olmsted County, Minnesota, described as follows:  
Commencing at the south southwest corner of said Southwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section 31; thence on an assumed bearing of North 89°33'55" East, along the south line of said Southwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter, 475.37 feet to the intersection of said south line with the northeasterly line of Winona Street; thence North 48°19'40" East 264.23 feet to the point of beginning; thence continuing North 48°19'40" East 20.54 feet; thence South 42°27'43" East 252.71 feet to said south line of the Southwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter; thence South 89°33'55" West, along said south line, 4.24 feet; thence North 46°24'54" West 250.75 feet to the point of beginning.  
The above described parcel contains 0.07 acres and is subject to any easements, covenants and restrictions of record.

- IRON PIPE WITH PLASTIC CAP  
STAMPED R.L.S.#21940 SET
- FOUND MONUMENT

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS SURVEY, PLAN, OR REPORT WAS PREPARED BY ME OR UNDER MY DIRECT SUPERVISION AND THAT I AM A DULY LICENSED LAND SURVEYOR UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

  
Geoffrey G. Griffin

DATE 9/4/2018 REG. NO. 21940

**G<sup>3</sup>**  
**G-Cubed**  
14070 Hwy 52 S.E.  
Chatfield, MN 55923

**ENGINEERING  
SURVEYING  
PLANNING**  
Ph. 507-867-1666  
Fax 507-867-1665  
www.ggg.to

DATE OF SURVEY: 9/4/2018  
Prepared For:  
Fred Gerlach  
132 Winona Street SE  
Chatfield, MN 55923  
SHEET 1 OF 1 FILE NO:18-257



# HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING STAFF REPORT

**Meeting Date:** April 7, 2025

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**Agenda Item:** Review Heritage Preservation Poster- Robert Vogel

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**Agenda Category:**

**Submitted By:** Alison Bentley

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**Recommended Motion:** Motion to approve.

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**Community Engagement and Outreach:**

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**FISCAL IMPACT:**

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**Attachments:**

[DRAFT- HPC Poster Design- Robert Vogel.pdf](#)

# PRESERVATION MONTH MAY 2025

*Honoring the Service of*



*Robert Vogel*

Robert Vogel was known for his work in historical preservation. Vogel served as the City of Chatfield's Preservation Planner from 2008 until his passing in 2024.

Vogel was a historical geographer with 35+ years of professional experience in cultural resource management, historic preservation and public history. He successfully completed 600+ historic preservation projects in twelve states and overseas. His professional qualifications met the standards of the Secretary of the Interior in History, Architectural History and Archeology.

A Master of Arts in Geography was earned from the University of Minnesota in 1980 after post-graduate work at Northwestern State University of Louisiana in 1978. He earned his bachelors in geography and history from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities in 1975.

Vogel's professional experience after graduation included being "Principal Pathfinder with CRM LLC (Robert C. Vogel and Associates) at Spring Grove, MN, as well as preservation planner or consultant for the cities (by order of service) Cottage Grove, Newport, Farmington, Edina, and Chatfield, Minnesota. Additionally, he was Vice President and Senior Historian of Bear Creek Archaeology Inc. at Decorah, Iowa from 1989-1998.

During his life Vogel had professional associations with the Association of Iowa Archaeologists, Louisiana Historical Association, National Alliance of Preservation Commissions, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Organization of American Historians, Preservation Alliance of Minnesota, and Society for Industrial Archaeology.

The author of over 40 peer-reviewed monographs, journal articles, chapters in books and book reviews, Vogel worked on over 50 government agency preservation plans as well as historical structure reports, and was involved in numerous HABS/HAER/HALS documentation studies, making numerous local designations, National Register nominations and determinations of eligibility during his research work. This included over 200 National Register of Historic Places multiple property documentation forms.

Vogel once told an audience "I came to archaeology as a historian and geographer." Thanks to his work, people have a basis to better know their past.



*Chatfield* MINNESOTA



HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING STAFF  
REPORT

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**Agenda Item:** Updating Mural

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**Subject | Summary:**

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