



## STATE OF IOWA

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GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC DEFENSE  
IOWA HOMELAND SECURITY AND  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIVISION

**PATTY JUDGE**  
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DAVID L. MILLER, ADMINISTRATOR

# **Historical and Architectural Reconnaissance Survey for 2008 Flood Projects in Coralville, Johnson County**

*HADB 52-051*

**Surveyors: Marlys Svendsen & Justine Zimmer**

**Date Submitted: December 19, 2008**

# Coralville, Johnson County

# Reconnaissance Survey

**Date:** 12/19/2008

**Surveyors:** Marlys Svendsen  
& Justine Zimmer

## **i. Introduction and Purpose**

Between December 3 and December 22, 2008, Zimmer and Svendsen completed a field inspection of a list of 45 pending Health and Safety Demolition projects and 404 Hazard Mitigation Buy-Out projects in Coralville.<sup>1</sup> An additional 16 properties were inspected but the FEMA program for them was either unidentified or presumed to not include a FEMA program at the time of the completion of this report. Photography of the properties was completed by Zimmer on between December 16<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. The purpose of the site visits was four fold:

- a. To determine whether the list appeared to include all pending properties.
- b. To determine whether or not any of the 55 addresses were part of a potential NRHP historic district.
- c. For potential mitigation purposes, to identify properties with a potential for architectural salvage.
- d. Also for mitigation purposes, to identify other potential measures that could be undertaken in the event a potential historic district were identified.

## **ii. Reconnaissance Survey**

Zimmer and Svendsen completed a windshield survey of the properties, which were located in two areas. The Edgewater Residential Area includes a strip of houses located along the east side of Edgewater Drive between Edgewater Park to the west and the Iowa River immediately to the east. Edgewater Park contains the Edgewater Park Site (13JH1132), a 3,800-year-old Late Archaic Table Rock campsite that the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) surveyed and test excavated in 2003.<sup>2</sup> The residential blocks comprising the Edgewater Residential Area are located on the far eastern edge of Coralville. The APE evaluated for these houses excludes the archaeological site in the park.

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<sup>1</sup>From the 1763 Demolition Data Base as maintained by Kathy McCarty FEMA at the AFO Cedar Rapids, effective 12/16/2008.

<sup>2</sup>Whittaker, William E., Dunne, Michael T., Artz, Joe Alan, Horgen, Sarah E., and Anderson, Mark L., "Edgewater Park: A Late Archaic Campsite along the Iowa River," *Midcontinental Journal of Archaeology*, Spring 2007; abstract available online at: [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_qa3904/is\\_200704/ai\\_n19433705](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3904/is_200704/ai_n19433705), accessed 12/16/2008.

The second area, the Close Addition Area, is a multi-block residential area located south of Fifth Street along Second Avenue, Second Avenue Place, and Third Avenue. This area abuts the north edge of Clear Creek approximately three blocks west of the point where the creek joins the Iowa River. It also abuts the Original Town of Coralville which is located between the river and the addition. The Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the Close Addition Area buildings was identified to include property(ies) located along facing blocks so that potential districts could be evaluated.

**Individual Resources:**

No potential individually NRHP eligible properties were identified in the Edgewater Residential Area. All but one of the residences are less than 50 years old and all have substantial loss of integrity. Individually NRHP eligible properties in the Close Addition Area include two listed buildings and one potentially eligible property.

- The old ***Coralville Public School*** at 310 Fifth Street, is located just to the west of the Close Addition and is discussed below as part of the *Fifth Street Historic District*. It has been listed on the NRHP since 1974.
- The ***Coralville Union Ecclesiastical Church and Town Hall*** at 406 Second Avenue was listed on the NRHP in 1977. It is discussed below as part of the *Fifth Street Historic District*.
- A third building identified as potentially individually NRHP eligible is the ***Christian and Justina Korn House***, 402 Third Avenue. It was built in ca. 1875 by the Korns who were German immigrants to the area in the 1870s. Today, the Korn House is part of small complex of buildings that may include Korn's blacksmith shop. Christian was Coralville's blacksmith and served on the Coralville City Council from 1897-1903. The house is an example of a vernacular house form common to German and Bohemian neighborhoods in Johnson and Linn County. It is a side-gabled one-story house with a saltbox shaped addition along the rear façade. The asymmetrical front has 2/2 double-hung windows and an off-set entrance. The house has a standing seam metal roof, a material and design that became popular in nearby Iowa City after 1900 and before World War I. Though the house has synthetic siding, the outbuildings do not. The house is considered potentially individually eligible under NRHP Criteria A and C. Both are located a half-block south of Fifth Street with a number of newer residences or apartment buildings separating them from the Fifth Street corridor.

Several additional buildings with strong historic associations with political and civic leaders in Coralville's pre and post-1900 history are located in the Close Addition area as well, but because of only a moderate level of physical integrity, none are considered individually eligible. Historic associations and architectural significance under NRHP Criteria A, B or C for these buildings are identified as part of the district discussion below.

## **District Resources:**

No potential NRHP eligible historic districts were identified in the vicinity of the Edgewater Residential Area.

One small district, the *Fifth Street Historic District*, was identified as a potential NRHP eligible historic district in the Close Addition Area. This district derives significance under Criteria A, B and C for its association with Coralville's early civic history. It contains examples of public buildings, including one that is individually listed on the NRHP, and three residences associated with the community's early political leaders. One additional nearby building just south of the Fifth Street corridor is not part of the district but has similar historic associations (the *Christian and Justina Korn House*, 402 Third Avenue). The presence of significantly altered buildings or buildings erected in more recent years south of Fifth Street separates this building from the main corridor, preventing the district boundary from being extended to include this property. The period of significance for the *Fifth Street Historic District* is ca. 1868 through 1950.

### **a. Area Descriptions**

Both the Edgewater Residential Area and the Close Addition Area are located within the city limits of Coralville. The Edgewater Residential Area is a low-lying stretch of ground immediately adjacent to the west/south bank of the Iowa River upstream of the historic Iowa Light and Power Company Dam. This neighborhood contains a mix of 1, 1½, and 2-story mostly frame residences facing the river with Edgewater Park located west of Edgewater Drive. The houses date from the late 1960s through the 1990s. They are examples of various vernacular house forms from the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century including 1-story side-gabled summer cottages, Split-level houses, Ranch/Rambler forms, and Minimal Traditional forms. Nearly all have been modified since their original construction with some reflecting general expansion and others showing a shift from seasonal use to year-round use. Most of houses post-date the completion of Coralville Dam and Coralville Reservoir located upstream of Coralville in 1958. Nearly every house in the post-war group has experienced loss of integrity through the addition of newer wings, attached garages, synthetic siding, entrance alterations, decks, and window changes.

The Close Addition Area is a low-lying area immediately west of the Original Town of Coralville extending along the south side of 5<sup>th</sup> Street. The south boundary of the area extends along Clear Creek, a tributary of the Iowa River, and the western edge is roughly defined by Biscuit Creek, which leads into Clear Creek. Buildings in the area date from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century through the 1990s. They include examples of various vernacular house forms from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries including 1-story side-gabled cottages, American Four-squares, 2-story Gabled-Front and Wing houses, 1-story or 2-story Front-Gabled houses, Minimal Traditional forms, Ranch/Rambler forms, and various styled apartment buildings including "mansard-plexes." Most single-family

residences in the neighborhood have been modified since their original construction and most have experienced loss of integrity through the addition of newer wings, attached garages, synthetic siding, entrance alterations, decks, and window changes. A number of less altered houses survive along a two block stretch of the Fifth Street corridor and are identified below as the *Fifth Street Historic District*.

## **b. Historical Background**

The early history of Coralville dates to Iowa's territorial period when mills were established along the Iowa River in the vicinity of the future town site in the mid 1840s. The town of Coralville was not platted until four decades later in 1873. The town takes its name from fossilized coral identified in local limestone deposits in 1866. Mill operations provided the principal economic activity in the small community until ca. 1900 when changes in mill technology shifting causing population to begin to decline. Flooding was a regular occurrence along the Iowa River and its tributary streams including Clear Creek during the pre and post-1900 years. Early discussion of a dam upstream of Coralville began during the 1930s. In 1938, Congress authorized the dam but World War II suspended construction until 1948. It was completed ten years later in 1958 by the U.S. Corps of Engineers.

Coralville's 20<sup>th</sup> century history paralleled that of the University of Iowa, in particular the west campus which abutted the city limits of Coralville. Following World War II, the University of Iowa saw a surge in enrollment primarily associated with the return of veterans. A number of the veterans brought young families with them as they returned to student status and Coralville offered popular, affordable housing choices. Census records show Coralville population more than doubling from 433 in 1940 to 977 in 1950. University growth was accompanied by opening of the Veterans Administration Hospital on the west side of Iowa City in 1952. Coralville was well situated to continue to grow as a suburban community with resident populations comprised of large numbers of University of Iowa students and affiliates of the VA Hospital and University Hospital by the 1950s and 1960s.

Coralville's population reached 2,357 in 1960 shortly before construction of Interstate 80 north of Coralville began in 1963. The decade of the 1960s saw population nearly triple to 6,130 by 1970. Growth along the "Coralville Strip" that followed the route of U.S. Highway 6 saw construction of dozens of new businesses including restaurants, motels, service stations, and retail outlets. A Coralville landmark since the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Iowa City Electric Light Company's power plant on the Iowa River and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, ceased operations in 1968. The dam at this site was established in 1886 to use the river's water power to generate electricity for Iowa City users. The present building contains sections dating from 1902, 1916 and the 1930s - 1940s. The Iowa River Power Company Restaurant opened in the rehabilitated power plant in the mid-1970s. Growth in physical area and population continued as the 21<sup>st</sup> century approached. A special census in 2003 showed Coralville with a population of 17,269, its growth rate making it one of the fastest growing cities in the state.



**200 Block of Fifth Street, looking east-southeast**

***Fifth Street Historic District***

An early transportation route connecting outlying areas of Johnson County with the county seat in Iowa City extended through Coralville. It followed the east-west alignment of what is today Fifth Street and what was originally known as the “Marengo Road” or “Patterson Street.” Fifth Street and the blocks to either side contained a series of modest public buildings, churches, and private residences built before and after 1900. The potential *Fifth Street Historic District* contains 13 primary resources with 8 contributing and 5 noncontributing. Several of the contributing resources are identified below beginning at the west end with the old public school and extending east towards the Iowa River for two blocks and then south along Second Avenue for a half block:

The ***Coralville Public School***, 310 Fifth Street, was built in 1876 (NRHP-listed) near Biscuit Creek. It served as Coralville’s only school until 1949 and closed two years later when the district was absorbed by the Iowa City School District. In 1983 it was restored by the Johnson County Historical Society and now functions as a public museum. It marks the west end of the *Fifth Street Historic District*. The school is a contributing resource in the district.

The ***Close House and Barn***, 305 Fifth Street, was built in ca. 1870 by Manly T. Close and his wife Hattie. Close partnered with other family members in the operation of the M.T. Close Paper Mill destroyed in the great flood of 1881. In its aftermath, he was an organizer of the Iowa City Electric Light Company which erected a dam and power plant at the site in 1886. Close served as mayor of Coralville in 1896 and he or his family were the likely namesake for the “Close Addition” containing most of the properties flooded along Clear Creek in 2008. The Close House and Barn are located north of Fifth Street in a wooded area along Biscuit Creek near the west end of the *Fifth Street Historic District*. Both structures are contributing resources in the district.

The ***Coralville Evangelical Free Church***, 213 Fifth Street, was built in 1950 on the site of the former Charles Robinson House along the north side of Fifth Street. The church was established in 1935 with the congregation holding Sunday services in the old Coralville City Hall on Second Avenue (see below). This building was used until the mid-1980s and is used as offices in 2008. The church is a contributing resource in the historic district.

The ***James and Mary (Dowman) Paintin House***, 208 Fifth Street, was built in ca. 1890 following the Paintins’ immigration to the area from England in 1882. The Paintins’ immigration may have been part of the substantial immigration from England to other parts of Iowa during the decade. Paintin served as Coralville mayor from 1897-1901. The building has experienced a loss of integrity through the years but its historic association with the Paintins qualifies it as a contributing resource in the *Fifth Street Historic District*.

The ***Edward and Harriet (Paintin) Koser House***, 202 Fifth Street, was built in ca. 1868 and became the Koser family residence in 1896. Koser served as Coralville’s mayor from 1902 until his death in 1935. Historical research by the Johnson County Historical Society identifies the fact that during his long tenure as mayor, the cemetery was moved (1908), electric lights were installed (1909), and a volunteer fire department was established (1929). The Koser House has experienced a loss of integrity through the years through the addition of synthetic siding but its historic association with Koser and Coralville’s civic history qualifies it as a contributing resource in the *Fifth Street Historic District*.

The ***Coralville Union Ecclesiastical Church and Town Hall***, 406 Second Avenue, was built in ca. 1885 (NRHP-listed). It is located along the east edge of the Close Addition Area and was originally built for duo use as a community church on the upper level and the town hall on the lower level. It functioned in this capacity until 1921 when the entire building became the Coralville City Hall. It continued in this use until ca. 1974. Sometime prior to 1993, the building was moved to a similar site directly across the street at 406 Second Avenue. Its continued eligibility for NRHP listing has not been evaluated by the SHPO.

One additional property in the *Fifth Street Historic District* is significant for its architectural contribution to the district – a vernacular American Four-square house at 212 Fifth Street that is an undocumented pattern book house from a company such as Gordon-Van Tine or Sears, Roebuck & Co. It is a contributing resource in the *Fifth Street Historic District*.

Together the mix of public and residential buildings of the *Fifth Street Historic District* focuses attention on Coralville’s early years as an Iowa River mill town and its growth as a suburban residential community affiliated with the growth of Iowa City and the University of Iowa after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The community’s first school was located adjacent to Biscuit Creek at the west end of the district while three mayors occupied houses midway along the street from 1896 to 1935. Further east on Fifth Street the Evangelical Free Church was established after World War II. Outside of the district at the east end of Fifth Street, the last power dam was built in Coralville in 1886 on the Iowa River. The Iowa City Electric Light Company Dam and Power Station continued to rebuild and add building elements with operations ceasing in the late 1960s. The *Fifth Street Historic District* together with this local river landmark forms “bookends” on the community’s civic story.<sup>3</sup>

**c. Significance**

In the opinion of the surveyors, there are no individually eligible NRHP properties in the Edgewater Residential Area and three NRHP listed or potentially significant individual resources in the Close Addition Area. The *Fifth Street Historic District* is the only potentially eligible NRHP historic district in the Close Addition Area with significance under Criteria A, B and C. The period of significance is ca. 1868 – 1950 for the potential district. Criterion D was not evaluated for either area but should be carefully evaluated for the Edgewater Residential Area based on the presence of the Edgewater Park Site (13JH1132).

**d. Sources**

*Atlas of Johnson County, Iowa.* Davenport, Iowa: The Huebinger Survey & Map Publishing Co., 1900.

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“Coralville Historic Walking Tour, Bookends of Coralville,” Johnson County Historical Society, undated.

*History of Johnson County, Iowa, containing a history of the county and its townships, cities and villages from 1836 to 1882, 1883.* Reprinted Evansville, Indiana: Unigraph, Inc., ca. 1973

Interview emails with Leigh Ann Randak, Curator, Johnson County Historical Society, Coralville, Iowa. December 2008, [www.jchs.iowa.org](http://www.jchs.iowa.org).

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<sup>3</sup>“Coralville Historic Walking Tour, Bookends of Coralville,” Johnson County Historical Society, undated.



National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Coralville Union Ecclesiastical Church and Coralville Town Hall, National Park Service, listed date January 4, 1977.

*Portrait and Biographical Record of Johnson, Poweshiek and Iowa Counties, Iowa...* Chicago: Chapman Bros., 1893.

Whittaker, William E., Dunne, Michael T., Artz, Joe Alan, Horgen, Sarah E., and Anderson, Mark L., "Edgewater Park: A Late Archaic Campsite along the Iowa River," *Midcontinental Journal of Archaeology*, Spring 2007; abstract available online at: [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_qa3904/is\\_200704/ai\\_n19433705](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3904/is_200704/ai_n19433705), accessed 12/16/2008.

### **iii. Mitigation Recommendations**

#### **a. Salvage Potential**

The Coralville property list showed a number of properties within the potential *Fifth Street Historic District* and the Close Addition Area south of Fifth Street that may have architectural salvage available. Because of the active architectural salvage operation in Johnson County under the auspices of the Friends of Historic Preservation, it is recommended that this organization be given the first opportunity to obtain salvaged elements from properties being demolished.

#### **b. Intensive Surveys**

Documentation of the *Fifth Street Historic District* and major contributing resources within the district identified above is recommended. The removal of many of the older buildings in this neighborhood marks the end of most of Coralville's late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century building stock. In addition, it is recommended that procedures be undertaken by the SHPO to re-confirm the NRHP eligibility of the Coralville Union Ecclesiastical Church and Coralville Town Hall following its move from 405 to 406 Second Avenue in ca. 1993.

### **iv. Property List for Coralville, Johnson County – 12/19/2008**

The property list below for Coralville contains the addresses of the 55 buildings, their date of construction if known, the surveyor's opinion of individual eligibility, the surveyor's opinion of district eligibility, the SHPO review status, the SHPO opinion of eligibility, and a the FEMA program designation where applicable. In addition, evaluations were made for additional

resources within the potential *Fifth Street Historic District*. No individual opinions regarding potential salvage of historic interior or exterior building elements are provided; see iii.b discussion above.

**Comprehensive List of FEMA and Non-FEMA Program Properties Reviewed in Coralville, Johnson County**

Iowa Inventory Number	Street Number	Street	FEMA Program	SHPO Reviewed	SHPO DOE	Year Built	Surveyor Opinion – Individually Eligible	Surveyor Opinion - District Eligible	Surveyor Opinion District Status – Contributing Or Noncontributing-C/NC	Salvage Y/N – not evaluated individually
-	402	Second Avenue	None?	No	-	1930	No	No	-	
-	404	Second Avenue	Demo	No	-	1953	No	No	-	
52-00254	406	Second Avenue	None?	Yes	Yes	ca. 1885	NRHP listed	Yes	C	
-	408	Second Avenue	Demo	No	-	1966	No	Yes	NC	
-	351	Second Avenue PI	Demo	No	-	1983	No	No	-	
-	401	Second Avenue PI	Demo	No		1983	No	No	-	
-	402	Second Avenue PI	Demo	No		1983	No	No	-	
-	403	Second Avenue PI	Demo	No		1962	No	No	-	
-	405	Second Avenue PI	Demo	No		1962	No	No	-	-
-	407	Second Avenue PI	Demo	No		1962	No	No	-	
-	409	Second Avenue PI	Demo	No		1964	No	No	-	
-	411	Second Avenue PI	Demo	No		1965	No	No	-	
-	311	Third Avenue	Demo	No		1900	No	No	-	
-	313	Third Avenue	Demo	No		1900	No	No	-	
-	402	Third Avenue	None?	No		ca. 1875	Yes	No	-	
-	403	Third Avenue	Demo	No		1961	No	No	-	
-	406	Third Avenue	Demo	No		1960	No	No	-	
-	407	Third Avenue	Demo	No		1922	No	No	-	
-	408	Third Avenue	Demo	No		1900	No	No	-	
-	410	Third Avenue	Demo	No		1900	No	No	-	
-	202	Fifth Street	None?	No		ca.1868	No	Yes	C	

Iowa Inventory Number	Street Number	Street	FEMA Program	SHPO Reviewed	SHPO DOE	Year Built	Surveyor Opinion – Individually Eligible	Surveyor Opinion - District Eligible	Surveyor Opinion District Status – Contributing Or Noncontributing-C/NC	Salvage Y/N – not evaluated individually
-	204	Fifth Street	Demo	No		1963	No	Yes	NC	
-	206	Fifth Street	Demo	No		1965	No	Yes	NC	
-	208	Fifth Street	Demo	No		1920	No	Yes	C	
-	210	Fifth Street	None?	No		1907	No	Yes	C	
-	212	Fifth Street	None?	No		ca. 1914	Yes?	Yes	C	
-	213	Fifth Street	None?	No		1950	No	Yes	C	
-	302	Fifth Street	Demo	No		1912	No	Yes	NC	
-	304	Fifth Street	Demo	No		1960	No	Yes	NC	
-	305	Fifth Street	None	No		ca. 1870	Yes?	Yes	C	
-	306	Fifth Street	None?	No		-	-	-	Vacant/Razed	
52-00255	310	Fifth Street	None	Yes	Yes	1876	NRHP listed	Yes	C	
-	697	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1977	No	No	-	
-	699	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1977	No	No	-	
-	701	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1972	No	No	-	
-	705	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1994	No	No	-	
-	709	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1970	No	No	-	
-	713	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1975	No	No	-	
-	715	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1971	No	No	-	
-	717	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1968	No	No	-	
-	719	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1967	No	No	-	
-	723	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1923	No	No	-	
-	725	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1967	No	No	-	
-	727	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1967	No	No	-	
-	729	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1965	No	No	-	
-	731	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1972	No	No	-	
-	801	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1961	No	No	-	
-	805	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1962	No	No	-	
-	809	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1962	No	No	-	

Iowa Inventory Number	Street Number	Street	FEMA Program	SHPO Reviewed	SHPO DOE	Year Built	Surveyor Opinion – Individually Eligible	Surveyor Opinion - District Eligible	Surveyor Opinion District Status – Contributing Or Noncontributing-C/NC	Salvage Y/N – not evaluated individually
-	811	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1964	No	No	-	
-	813	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1963	No	No	-	
-	817	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1962	No	No	-	
-	823	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1961	No	No	-	
-	829	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1968	No	No	-	
-	831	Edgewater Dr	404 Buy-out	No		1963	No	No	-	
-	62	Shadow Ln	unidentified?	No		1966	No	No	-	
-	64	Shadow Ln	unidentified?	No		1966	No	No	-	
-	66	Shadow Ln	unidentified?	No		1966	No	No	-	
-	610	Shadow Ln	unidentified?	No		1962	No	No	-	
-	612	Shadow Ln	unidentified?	No		1962	No	No	-	
-	614	Shadow Ln	unidentified?	No		1962	No	No	-	

**v. Representative Maps and Photographs**

Photographs of the potentially eligible property and representative photos from the potential *Fifth Street Historic District* and individually NRHP-listed properties within the district are included below along with historic maps and a ca. 2008 map showing the location of the historic district and individually eligible property.