The mission of the Historic
Preservation Commission is to
recognize, promote, and
preserve Waterloo's historic
sites and cultural heritage in
partnership with its citizens,
agencies, and organizations.



101 ALBANY STREET

BESS'S CHAPEL AME CHURCH

Early home to Waterloo's first AME congregation

This is the historic site of Waterloo's first African Methodist Episcopal (AME) congregation, led by the Reverend I.W. Bess from 1913-16.

In 1914, the congregation acquired the former "railroad chapel" from Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern Railroad and worshipped here from 1914-59. The church later became known as Bethel AME Church and Payne AME Church.

Rev. Bess was a spokesperson for the Black community and worked for equality, political advancement, and social and economic freedom. As part of his efforts, he founded a Big Brother Mission, fought against racial restrictions for the public beach at Cedar River, and opened the sanctuary as a gathering space for the community.

Provided by the City of Waterloo Historic Preservation Commission through as Missan American Civil Rights Great from the National Park Sec

Timeline

African-American Civil Rights Grant recieved by the Waterloo Historic Preservation Commission -2018



RFP sent out by the Commission to hire a consultant for a Battle for Equality: Civil Rights in Waterloo Project - 2018



Thomas Zahn and Associates hired for the project - 2018



Research completed by consultants - 2018-2023

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Final Project presented by Thomas Zahn and Associates - August 2023



Waterloo Civil Rights Markers —

Battle for Equality - Civil Rights in Waterloo—

The consultant completed lowa Site Inventory Forms for 7 sites, as 4 sites had ISIF Forms completed by Amanda Loughlin. The designs for the signs were completed and fabricated by the Waterloo Public Works Department.



As part of the project, Thomas
Zahn and Consultants completed
an Amendment to the National
Register Nomination for the Rath
Administration Building in Waterloo.

Research Sites

- B.F. Tredwell Tourist Home
- Fullilove School of Music
- KBBG-FM Radio
- Knights of Pythias, Furgerson Lodge No. 5
- Milton F. and Vaeletta Fields
 House
- W.A. Haffa Building 220-224
 East 4th Street
- Furgerson-Fields Park
- Bess's Chapel AME Church
- East High School
- Furgerson Beech Street House
- UWPA Union Hall, CIA Local 46







Walking Tour



6 of the 7 sign locations are presented on this map with the 7th location at 220-224 East 4th St

More Information?

Reach out to Lexi Schneider at the City of Waterloo at (319)291-4366 or visit our website at www.cityofwaterlooiowa.com/dep artments/planning-zoning/historic_preservation_comm ission/civic_rights_project.php