

Minutes  
**Mt Lebanon Historic Preservation Board**  
Monday, June 15, 2015, 5 p.m.  
Mt Lebanon Municipal Building

**Attendance:** Joel Cluskey, chair; Michelle Zmijanac, vice chair; Anna Siefken, Ben Wetmore, John Bendel, commission liaison; Susan Morgans, staff liaison. **Absent:** Jonathan Hill, Jim Martin, Yvette Yescas

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Joel Cluskey called the meeting to order at 5:09 p.m.

**CITIZENS COMMENTS** There were no citizen comments.

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES** The May minutes were unanimously approved.

**LIAISON REPORTS**

**Commission:** Commissioner Bendel noted that he and Yvette Yescas would be meeting with several Virginia Manor residents at their request later in the week to answer their questions regarding the design guidelines and draft ordinance. Everyone agreed that it is important to answer resident questions promptly so misinformation does not circulate. Yvette is working on a short Q & A that can be distributed to all, so everyone is “on the same page.” The best thing to do is to refer people to the municipal website, where they can view the PowerPoint and summary from the last meeting. They also may call or email Susan Morgans, who is collecting comments for the consultants. Please encourage people to reserve their comments, if possible, until after the proposed guidelines are released in July.

Susan Morgans said she had email correspondence with a resident expressing concern (resident had attended previous meeting). She also had an informational conversation with a lawyer representing a group of Virginia Manor residents. Both conversations were very pleasant. Lawyer was pleased to learn of future opportunities for public comment. He would like committee to consider making the draft of the

guidelines available to residents prior to the next neighborhood meeting. We will discuss this with T& B Planning.

Susan will send the schedule for the Virginia Manor meetings to everyone and also will check the contract to see if T & B is required to attend a third neighborhood meeting and what the final produce will look like.

**Historical Society:** No representative was present, but Joel Cluskey reported that the society is waiting to hear about grants it has applied for; it is not yet ready to put the renovation project out for bid.

**Economic Development Council:** Ben Wetmore attended the last meeting. He reported that the EDC was allocated \$14,000 to hire a consultant to create a strategic plan for Uptown. He will find out about opportunities for public input. Although not necessarily in the HPB's purview, Joel Cluskey suggested that the lighting Uptown is not bright enough. Anna Siefken noted that CMU has a new program called Dark Skies that might be worth the EDC's attention. Ben also said that the new hotel is doing very well and that the Pennsylvania Cable Network has made a video of Mt. Lebanon's commercial district to promote tourism. The video mentions that Uptown is part of a National Register District is mentioned in the video.

**Real Estate Agent Coffee:** Michelle Zmijanac said that she and Susan Morgans would meet in July to set a date and begin planning. Susan would like to involve several agents in the planning. Coffee will take place in late fall.

**Staff:** Susan Morgans reported on the search for a new public works director.

## **SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Virginia Manor:** This was covered under liaison reports

**Brick Streets:** Yvette Yescas will get push PennDOT for some closure on the mitigation plan for Castle Shannon Boulevard.

**Historic District Signs:** Ben Wetmore has designed something that might be appropriate for the historical society to sell to private

homeowners in the historic district and also could be used to mark entrances or important sites in the historic district. Design and wording obviously would need refining, but everyone liked the first draft. Commissioner Bendel suggested that there should be some money requested for historic districts signage in the 2016 budget. Susan will provide Joel with some information she has about our municipal entry sign project so that he can come up with a budget number.

**Historic District Tax Credits** : Anna Siefken looked into LERTA and does not recommend it for Mt. Lebanon residential use, as this form of tax abatement requires that a neighborhood or street be “blighted.” She will continue to look into other incentives for preserving and improving historic properties, including finding out how some other National Register District address this issue.

**OTHER BUSINESS** There will be no meeting in August.

**ADJOURNMENT** The meeting adjourned at 6:35. Next meeting is Monday, July 20, at 5 p .m. in the municipal building.