

Minutes

Mt Lebanon Historic Preservation Board

Monday, September 21, 2015, 5 p.m., Mt Lebanon Municipal Building

Attendance: Joel Cluskey, chair; Michelle Zmijanac, vice chair; Anna Siefken, Ben Wetmore, Yvette Yescas, Jonathan Hill, John Bendel, commission liaison; Susan Morgans, staff liaison; Keith McGill, municipal planner; Jim Wojcik, Historical Society of Mount Lebanon

Absent: Jim Martin

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Joel Cluskey called the meeting to order at 5:08 p.m.

CITIZENS COMMENTS Jim Wojcik, president of the Historical Society of Mount Lebanon, reported that the society needs only \$110,000 more to begin construction. The design is almost finished and reviews from the PHMC and the Allegheny County Economic Redevelopment Authority have been good. The municipality has hired an estimate to double-check the society's estimate of funds needed. He asked HPB members to check out the society's campaign video on the website. The society will hold a series of community open houses.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES The July minutes were approved with two corrections.

LIAISON REPORTS

Commissioner: Commissioner John Bendel reviewed how the plan to hire a consultant to prepare guidelines for Virginia Manor came about, including that historic preservation is a component of the municipal comprehensive plan, the establishment of local historic districts is part of the HPB's long-range plan and Virginia Manor requested preservation help. Recognizing there is a lot of concern as well as support for the guidelines, Mr. Bendel wondered whether a subset of guidelines might remain voluntary and others guidelines be made mandatory. He will discuss the project with the commission in discussion session September 28 and get some direction regarding policy. Joel, Yvette and Susan will speak at meeting. Some members felt strongly that the board should recommend adopting the guidelines and the ordinance, as the board has been working toward this goal for

more than five years. Other members were concerned about recommending a draft ordinance that the board had not seen. A lengthy discussion followed. Ultimately, Yvette Yescas moved and Michelle Zmijanac seconded the following motion: “ *The Historic Preservation Board recommends that the Commission thank T& B Planning for their exceptional work on design guidelines and a draft ordinance, and continues to evaluate both in cooperation with the historic preservation board.*” The motion passed 4-1 with Jonathan Hill abstaining.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Historic District Signage: Ben Wetmore has been working with a sign company regarding fabrication of signs that could identify houses in the National Register District and later be modified to serve as larger identification signs in prominent places in town. He will firm up pricing within the next two weeks.

Brick Streets: Yvette Yescas reported that the team PennDOT hired to prepare a mitigation plan that would identify, evaluate and prioritize maintenance of our brick streets has visited Mt. Lebanon and currently is working with PennDOT on costs and other issues in order to create a draft plan. Susan Morgans mentioned that it had come to her attention that some companies or individuals are willing to pay up to 80 cents per brick that cannot be re-used, as in the case of Castle Shannon Boulevard. Although the HPB hopes most of our local brick streets can be retained, she will ask staff liaison Bonnie Cross to bring this issue to the attention of the Environmental Sustainability Board in the event that Mt. Lebanon might find a way to either sell used bricks or make them available to residents free. Yvette Yescas will ask PennDOT’s Tyler Mercer to talk to the consultant about a policy regarding re-use of bricks.

OTHER BUSINESS Real Estate Agent Coffee: Plans for the Realtors Coffee are firm for October 28. Historic preservation will be an important topic.

ADJOURNMENT The meeting adjourned at 6:45.