

**MUNICIPALITY OF MT. LEBANON
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**

DATE: Tuesday, July 16, 2019

TIME: 7 p.m.

PLACE: Mt. Lebanon Municipality – Commission Chambers

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Suzanne Seiber, James Cannon, Dennis Pittman

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Municipal Planner Ian McMeans, Municipal Engineer Dan Deiseroth

1. Minutes

June 18, 2019, meeting minutes. Mr. Cannon moved and Mr. Pittman seconded to approve the minutes of the June 18, 2019, Planning Board Meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Old Business

None

3. New Business

Annual report on the Mt. Lebanon Comprehensive Plan. In October of 2013 the municipality adopted *Elevate Mt. Lebanon* as the municipality's comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan guides public policy in terms of transportation, utilities, land use, recreation and housing.

Each year the planning board will review the status of various items contained in the plan and offer recommendations on possible items to be considered as priorities to assist the Commission in their annual budget and Capital Improvement Program decisions.

Mr. McMeans said the municipality has accomplished a number of goals as laid out in the comprehensive plan this year. The comprehensive plan is built around five main objectives with different goals and objectives under each category. Here are some of the highlights for 2019.

The Mt. Lebanon Commission held a retreat in March of this year to identify the top five priority projects for the next year-and-a-half. 1) Enhancements to the public information office. Susan Morgans, the long-time public information officer, retired at the beginning of 2019, and Laura Lilley was appointed as her replacement. Mt. Lebanon has contracted with an outside consultant to look at benchmarking of best practices that other cities and towns use for communication; the municipality strives to reach every resident. Based on the most recent census 25% of the population is 62 and older, 25% of the population is 18 and younger, so that leaves a wide range of ages in between who get their news in a variety of ways. A survey will be launched very soon to determine what are the ways people get their information from the municipality. There are a variety of ways the municipality disseminates information through the mtl magazine, the municipal website, LeboAlerts, social media – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram. There may be other ways of getting information out to residents that the municipality is unaware of. The consultant came on to the project on July 8. 2) Staffing of the building

inspection department. Joe Berkley, long-time building inspector, is retiring later in the year, and this provides an opportunity to reevaluate the inspections department to determine if all the services necessary, both in-house and contractual, are provided. There are a lot of third-party specialists in the inspections market that provide people dedicated to one particular aspect of inspections such as HVAC, or plan reviews, or building inspections. The current structure at the municipality is for all of the inspectors to be certified in all of those areas. This makes it difficult to find new people who have all of the required certifications. The Commission will be discussing this item in an upcoming Discussion Session. 3) The Washington Road Streetscape and Uptown Public Space Improvement projects. Phase 1 of the project is to replace the sidewalks and lighting throughout the entire business district. At their last meeting the Commission approved a \$5 million bond issue, with some of the funding going into the Washington Road Streetscape project. There is also approximately \$1 million in grant funding from both county and state sources the municipality has received for that project. Phase 2 is to look at Parse Way to repair sidewalks and the street. The street has split ownership between the municipality and the Port Authority. Phase 3 is public space improvements that include public art, directional signage, etc. that could be added to the business district; funding has also been secured for that phase. There has been an initial meeting with the Mt. Lebanon Partnership Design Committee, so the project is beginning. 4) Implementing recommendations for the Beverly Road Parking Study. The study was completed in 2017 and provided recommendations for potentially increasing parking around the Beverly Road Business District. This has gone through both the parking facilities advisory and traffic boards. One of the recommendations would be to change the stall striping when the lot is repaved, providing for more spaces. 5) Operational efficiency initiatives, looking at the way information is internally collected and reported. Phase 1 is a salaries study, which is currently underway. There was an initial report to the Commission from the consultant during a recent discussion session, and they will on-going provide reports as the project continues. This is a collaborative project with Upper St. Clair and Cranberry townships. The last salary study the municipality conducted was in 1999. It is always advisable to make sure numbers are on par with market data.

Mt. Lebanon is taking part in an initiative through CONNECT, a group with neighboring communities like the City of Pittsburgh and surrounding municipalities, and have a collective group that would work on policy issues through the University of Pittsburgh. With funding from the RK Mellon Foundation and the Port Authority they were able to bring in a nationally-recognized consultant from Miami to do a Transit Oriented Development study on key transit stops around the Pittsburgh region. Mt. Lebanon has taken part in that by hosting some of the meetings; they will be submitting their final report soon. Mr. McMeans said he would make sure the board received a copy of that report.

Several grants have been received, some stated previously, CITF and GEDF through Allegheny County; funding to make ADA improvements to North Meadowcroft Park; \$300,000 in Green Light Go funding through the state to install turning lanes, to add a right-turn lane from Segar to Bower Hill, and adding a right-turn lane on Bower Hill at Washington Road. The municipality has easements to install both of those right-turn lanes, and will need to be in discussion with the neighboring property owners. The municipality has received approximately \$1.4 million through the Green Light Go funding over the last three years, to make traffic signal and road enhancements. This has been very helpful for the community.

The animal control cooperative, housed out of the Mt. Lebanon Police Department, continues to be very successful for 14 communities throughout the South Hills, who split the costs to run the program. In 2018 Bethel Park was added, so the operation does continue to be expanded.

Earlier in 2019 the planning board recommended updates to the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO). The commission is holding a public hearing at their next meeting regarding those updates and will vote on the updates at their August meeting.

A new code enforcement officer was hired as part of the Commission review of the inspections department, to see if there are ways to enhance services provided to the community.

The Comprehensive Plan calls for enhanced communication between the Historic Preservation Board (HPB) and Planning Board. A couple of Planning Board members have attended HPB meetings, and HPB has a designated liaison to the planning board. Mr. McMeans sends the liaison a monthly review regarding the planning board agenda.

The Historical Society is now open. This has been a long-term project and the major renovation phase was completed in late 2018, and they are open for tours and events. An exhibit from the Smithsonian regarding World War II was recently on display; they continue to raise funds to refurbish the old McMillan house.

The Community Relations Board (CRB) completed another year of their Residents' Academy. The fire department has its Citizens' Fire Academy, and the police department has its Citizens' Police Academy, so the CRB decided to start the Residents' Academy. Once-a-week for seven weeks a municipal department head comes in and talks about how their department operates, and what services they provide. It provides a great opportunity for residents to learn more about the departments and the services that are provided to the community.

Mr. McMeans said this concludes the description of the key elements completed from the comprehensive plan. There are several items that are still in progress: improvements to the recreation facility continue; purchasing of new equipment for public works for recreation as needed; the public works facility project should be completed this year – we're currently on the third phase of that project – the first two phases are completed; we are continuing with ALCOSAN's Wet Weather initiative even though the municipality hasn't received the updated consent order at this time.

Mr. Pittman asked about the land at the southern end of the public works facility property, and if the Commission has decided on a use.

Mr. McMeans said the planning board recommended, and the Commission approved, installing a trailhead with amenities such as benches, and connecting that with the Robb Hollow trail.

Mr. Pittman asked if that was being designed in-house.

Mr. Deiseroth said there has been input from the Parks Advisory Board for the design.

Mr. Pittman asked if the time-frame for the trailhead was concurrent with the public works facility.

Mr. Deiseroth indicated they are independent of each other.

Mr. Pittman asked if there was a time-table for its completion.

Mr. McMeans said the municipality applied for grant funding and are waiting on the results. Plans are complete.

Mr. Pittman asked if sidewalks would be put in on the east side of Cedar Boulevard to allow for pedestrian access to the trailhead.

Mr. McMeans said there is money allocated in 2019 in the capital improvement project plan for a walkway along Cedar Boulevard from Beadling to the new entrance to the public works facility.

Mr. Pittman moved and Mr. Canon seconded to provide the annual update on the Comprehensive Plan to the Commission. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Citizen Comments

Elizabeth Rangel, 214 Altoona Place, wants the planning board to address the issue of damaging stormwater runoff to the back of their property. This area has been receiving a lot of attention from Gateway Engineers, and she appreciates their efforts. However, they are having problems with two acres of stormwater flowing through their garage and causing damage to their garage and retaining wall. She water is flowing down from the above properties from the adjacent streets – Mapleton and Marietta Place – and the damage began with the major storms in 2017. She asked what the next step is for addressing this issue.

Mr. Deiseroth said the public works director passed on to him the concerns regarding this property. He said he needs to see the property himself to determine what the next best course of action would be. However, this is on private property and is considered a private stormwater management problem. It does fall on him as the municipal engineer to determine which properties need to be addressed first, with those having issues of sewage in their homes being a higher priority. There are other residents that are getting together to address stormwater issues in their neighborhoods, to put in place stormwater systems where none existed. He said he would make arrangements with the Rangels to go and see the problem.

Mrs. Rangel thanked Mr. Deiseroth for his quick response.

5. Next Meeting — The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Mt. Lebanon Planning Board is **Tuesday, August 20, 2019**, at 7:00 p.m.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.