

**Mt. Lebanon Environmental Sustainability Board
Meeting Minutes**

July 9, 2020 – Virtual

- **Call Meeting to Order**

Roll Call:

Attendees:

Abby Lawlor Morycz
Nora Alwine
Natalie Uschner-Arroyo
Bethany Foster-Wilhelm
Sarah Levinthal
Heather Wechter
Andrew Flynn
Bonnie Cross

Absent:

Tim Reidy
Hugh Beal

- **Public Comment:** None

- **Approval of March, 2020 Minutes:** Abby motioned to approve the March, 2020 minutes. Heather seconded and all members in attendance approved.

- **ESB Business:**

- **Climate Action Plan – New Approach.** The plan will document air quality issues. It will be important to track data. Heather said that she started to look into it but didn't want to engage with anyone because she wasn't sure that we would be meeting due to COVID. Abby put the idea of an Eco District out to the members to see if it was something that the board was interested in pursuing.

Andrew was not opposed, but feels that the board needs assistance in what the practical steps would be. Heather questioned what the cost would be, and that a lot of different stakeholder groups would need to be a part of it. Abby added that Millvale would be a great resource. Natalie said that it created a brand as the community as a whole were engaged. Beth suggested engaging students and gave Airnow.gov as an example. There is free education and they use a system of colored flags that also engages the students.

The group questioned whether there were annual reports that had to be created and maintained, what data was available and how it could be tracked going forward, and that it would help to look at samples of eco-district reports from other communities.

Abby said that Millvale had information online. Initially, you need to commit to the project, then create goals. At least every two years, you need to revisit the goals to make sure that you are progressing. She said that even if we wanted to commit to the CAP, it could be a part of the larger plan.

Andrew looked at Millvale's site and said that the structure of the borough, the library, and the commercial district was the same as Mt. Lebanon. Abby explained that they began the process through a grant and that the library actually pays their sustainability coordinator. She suggested taking a look at the Millvale plan and see if it's something that the board would like to explore further. In the meantime, we should revisit the CAP and also figure out how we are going to track data/information.

Andrew said that we could track data on a spreadsheet, but felt that it was more important to focus on what data we can get, whether it's from the utility companies, etc., and how we can gather data on a continuing basis. Abby asked whether we should focus on municipal buildings or on the community as a whole. Andrew responded that we get what we can and always try to push for more. He added that we could show savings, but also tout what the community is doing environmentally.

Sarah added that if we were able to get data now, once interventions like the solar panels on the library roof go in, the difference could be measured. Abby suggested the possibility of using the EPA's free Portfolio Manager.

Heather asked if the group could revisit what each board member was supposed to be working on given the amount of time from the last meeting. Abby said that what she recalled was that: she was going to explore grants; Sarah was the ESB representative to the Parks Master Plan Project; Heather was going to look into air quality; and Andrew was going to connect with Keith regarding available data. Everyone should take a look at the EcoDistrict information.

Regarding air quality monitors, Andrew asked what type of monitors there were, how we would 'plug in' if we purchased one on our own. There are permanent or portable monitors. Andrew said that just having background information would be helpful for now.

- **School Board Update** – Since Hugh wasn't able to make this meeting, Abby updated the group that the school did purchase some renewable energy in their last contract. Beth suggested mentioning the air quality flag program as a possibility for a school program. Hugh asked if there were items to bring to the school board; one suggestion was 'no idling'.
 - **Vibrant Uptown** – Andrew reported that virtual meetings had been held and went well. Currently, LaQuatra Bonci was working on design elements and would be reporting back to the Leadership group. It's a slow process, but the municipality wants to do it right. A big part of the project is how to utilize space in the best way. It is also an opportunity to encourage businesses to beautify their areas.
- **Commission Business:**
 - Parks Plan (mentioned above)
 - Andrew reported that the Library roof renovation and HVAC plan was moving forward, but there was some set-back with the latter. The intent is still to install solar panels.

- **New Business:**
 - Beth asked if new articles were needed for the magazine. Abby responded that she had looked at it, but because of COVID, some of the items might not happen. She will check to make sure that Laura has the list of items.
 - Solar flower at the high school
 - Andrew mentioned the Bird Park Stream Restoration project was moving forward
 - Reminder that the Library Virtual Garden Tour was July 12.
 - Natalie encouraged anyone to volunteer for the Lower Chartiers Creek clean-up on July 18.

- **Adjournment.** Abby motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Bethany, and unanimously approved by the members present.