

Minutes

Mt. Lebanon Historic Preservation Board

Monday, August 17, 2020, Mt. Lebanon Municipal Building

Attendance: Present: Matthew Moses, chair; Alex Ferraro, Philip Neusius, Marilyn Oberst-Horner, Anne Swager; Commission liaison Mindy Ranney, Staff liaison Laura Pace Lilley. **Absent:** Joe Bevins

Call to order: Board member Matthew Moses called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Citizen comments: none

Consideration of minutes:

The July minutes were approved unanimously

Administrative Reports

Chair report — None

Commission report — Mindy Ranney reported that the Commission would like to hear what type of background the HPB would like the person to have who will fill the board vacancy.

Staff report — Laura Lilley reported that member Jonathan Hill has resigned his position on the HPB. The Commission would be filling that unexpired term. The board said they would like an architectural historian as a first preference, a person with real estate experience as second priority, as well as a candidate from a diverse background. The board agreed to reach out to their contact lists to encourage applications, which are through the municipal website at www.mtlebanon.org.

She also said Finance Director Andrew McCreery said any unused funds, should there be any, for the sign project would roll over into 2021. He also suggested the board add any requests for additional money in 2021 soon. The board asked for \$10,000 for the four large entrance sign bars and another \$10,000 for the medallions to put towards some sign toppers on street signs in the Historic District. The request pushed aside the small entry signs and the neighborhood signs off for another time. Swager noted the board needed to begin educating the community on the importance and function of the signs.

New Business:

Proposed antenna for 230 Beverly Road — Phil Neusius said the consultant, working for Verizon, who wants to put a cell antenna on the top of The Embassy building in the historic district, says the antenna will not have any impact on the district. SHPO disagrees with that statement. Neusius said the board could comment, saying there are adverse affects and provide comment. The board agreed that the towers would have a negative impact and agreed it should comment. Swager said the antenna would be “extending visual clutter” into a

residential neighborhood. Neusius said he will prepare a letter to say they agree with SHPO, and will prepare a response to ask for mitigation and alternative considerations. He asked board members to send him their ideas for alternatives. Neusius would share his letter before it is sent. Neusius said the board, in that case, is just providing its opinion, as it has no approval powers.

Matthew Moses abstained from the conversation because Verizon is a client of his firm's.

Continuing business

Historic signage: Alex Ferraro reported that the RFP was made available for the historic sign design project. He said the municipality received two responses, both from sign manufacturing companies. But on further review, only one provided the correct response; the other entity provided extraneous information. He and Anne Swager recommended the municipality reject the responses and revise the RFP to make it clearer in hopes of attracting design services firms rather than sign manufacturers. Swager said she had hoped to get cohesive replies that carried the design across several sign styles. Lilley said if there were no further changes, she would release the RFP the following day.

Brick streets: Commission liaison Ranney reported the Commission did not extend the moratorium on brick street replacement through June 2021 as the Historic Preservation Board had asked. But she said it was the Commission's desire to not replace brick streets until the HPB has prepared the policy. A resident has been commenting about the poor condition of Parkway Drive. In the meantime, all brick streets would be getting an extra level of scrutiny before being approved for work. She said the Carnegie Mellon University Class that Anna Siefken proposed has cleared the next hurdle. If approved, that class would prepare life cycle costs of brick streets for the HPB's project.

Liaison reports:

Lebanon Economic Development Council, Joe Bevins: No report.

Historical Society of Mount Lebanon, Jonathan Hill: Laura Lilley said the Society will have its virtual annual fundraiser in October and that the information is on its website.

Planning Board, Alex Ferraro and Matthew Moses: Pending Development/Asbury Parking, 4th Ward Apartments. Matthew Moses reported the results of the July 21 planning board meeting. The parking expansion at Asbury has been tabled pending response to the engineer's report. The Community Builders Inc. presented a land development plan for preliminary approval for \$16.5 million rental property development on Castlegate Avenue on the former DePaul site, zoned R-4 with continuing care overlay. It would be owned by the TCB and a subsidiary of the Allegheny County Housing Authority. The proposal calls for 51 residential units: including 24 townhouses, and 25 apartment units. The management office would be onsite, along with 101 parking spaces and associated stormwater management. Moses said the design was high quality with brick faces, and a community space for gardens. Trees would be native. Construction would begin next summer.

Alex Ferraro said the planning board would be meeting the following day and he would report next month.

Mt. Lebanon Partnership Design committee, Joe Bevins: No report.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:08 p.m. The next meeting is Monday, September 21, at 5 p.m.