

Minutes
Mt. Lebanon Historic Preservation Board
Monday, September 21, 2020, Mt. Lebanon Municipal Building

Attendance: Present: Matthew Moses, chair; Alex Ferraro, Krista Ford, 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 5:03 p.m.

Introduction of new member: Krista Ford introduced herself. She is the director of library information services for Steptoe and Johnson law firm. She has lived in Mt. Lebanon for more than three years. She lives on Inglewood with two kids in Mt. Lebanon schools. Matthew Moses welcomed her and said the board was looking forward to working with her. Commissioner Mindy Ranney introduced herself and explained her role as Commission liaison to the board.

Citizen comments: none

Consideration of August 2020 minutes:

The August minutes were approved unanimously with one correction.

Administrative Reports

Chair report — None

Commission report — Mindy Ranney said a resident on Parkway Drive has been requesting the engineer review of his brick street because he believes it's unsafe. Ranney said the Commission did not renew the moratorium for 2021 but she said that the Commission's preference is to not make a decision on brick streets until a brick streets policy is in place. Unfortunately, the brick streets policy will not be voted on until 2021 due to delays caused by the pandemic.

Staff report — Laura Lilley read a letter into the record from Jim Wojcik, past president of the Historical Society of Mount Lebanon, who was in charge of the medallion fundraiser:

“Please share with the board that our Direct Mail Campaign for the sale of Historic District Contributing Medallions was quite successful. We discounted the medallion cost 20%, down to \$160 from the regular price of \$200. The mailing of about 3,200 letters dropped in June with an additional drop of a subset of addresses that were missed by the mail house in late July. The sale price remained in place until August 31st.

We sold and distributed close to 200 medallions with this effort. You should be seeing medallions on homes withing the Historic District. Inglewood, Jefferson, Parker and Vernon seemed to be the streets with the most interest.

We may hold another sale in November and December for Holiday shopping time, but those plans haven't been finalized just yet.

Thanks go to the Historic Preservation Board for working with the Historical Society on the medallion program.

Also, we are hoping to safely reopen the History Center sometime in October. We will only do this if we believe we can operate in a safe manner for our volunteers and visitors. The new exhibit is *Washington Road Then & Now: 1964 and 2019*. We have a series of pictures taken along Uptown Washington Road from 1964. Last year we had pictures taken from the same perspective. These will be displayed side-by-side along with other information and objects from our collection such as a seat from the Denis Theater and a wooden nickel (good for \$.05) from Algeo's Pharmacy.

Please let us know who on your Board ends up working with the Historical Society.

Best Regards, Jim"

New Business:

Krista Ford was appointed as the representative to the Historical Society of Mount Lebanon

The board unanimously voted to recommend that the Commission award a contract for historic sign design to Kolano Design.

Alex Ferraro reminded the board that the first RFP for historic sign design services yielded responses from only sign manufacturers but they were looking for a more holistic response. So those proposals were rejected and a new RFP issued that better explained the design program sought. He said Kolano was the best in the business, and creates exactly what the board is looking for. He said the proposal was comprehensive and thoughtful and would produce a good product for the sign companies to use in the manufacture. He noted the cost was slightly over the \$10,000 budget for the year but said given what the board is looking for, perhaps that would be OK.

Anne Swager said she's worked with Bill Kolano on a number of projects and they're a wonderful firm. They will give insight on the best designs for the Historic District. She said they also would help the municipality get the best materials for the project as well.

Continuing business

Brick streets: Mindy Ranney said Anna Siefken, a previous member of the HPB, is teaching a class at CMU that will research the life cycle costs of brick streets in order to help the board collect data for formulation of the brick street policy. Ranney said the commission is interested to see how long a brick street lasts, what the repair costs are, if bricks are comparable to other bricks in terms of building materials and how valuable are brick streets to residents, including

those who do not live on one. The class will present the results of the project to the Commission on December 8.

Ranney summarized the class description as: “The project will investigate how decision-making for evaluating, planning and budgeting for brick streets can be based not on only “initial capital cost” but on “lifetime cost and savings” – especially given anticipated belt tightening by communities, post-COVID-19. By considering more inclusive funding models, policy can address not only the financial implications but also the other benefits that residents can reap: slowing storm water runoff, calming traffic to increase safety, maintaining real estate values, encouraging material reuse, avoiding heat island effect, instilling neighborhood cohesiveness, and, perhaps most importantly, decreasing the environmental impacts of asphalt, cement, and concrete creation and use in cities.”

The class will also survey residents and present those results to the HPB. The board will have input on those questions.

Matthew Moses asked what the timeline is for the HPB’s work. Phil Neusius said the class should do its work first and then the HPB could do a virtual meeting in January once it has a better idea of what information it needs to collect. Ranney said the timeline would call for the writing and revising of the policy to be in 2021 with a draft ready by May and approved by August before budget season.

Phil Neusius, Marilyn Oberst-Horner, Anne Swager, Matthew Moses and Mindy Ranney will meet with the CMU class virtually to go over the survey.

Three-year strategic plan: Matthew Moses said he continues to work on the plan and will distribute his thoughts to the board soon.

Cell tower update: Phil Neusius reported that Verizon has shelved its plans to place an antenna at the top of the Embassy building, 230 Beverly Road. The HPB and the State Historic Preservation Office had both registered opinion that the tower would have an adverse impact on the Historic District.

Liaison reports:

Lebanon Economic Development Council, Joe Bevins: No report.

Historical Society of Mount Lebanon: No report

Planning Board, Alex Ferraro and Matthew Moses: Alex Ferraro attended the August meeting but said there were no substantive items, other than the board setting goals and priorities, with the next meeting scheduled for October.

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

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:01 p.m. The next meeting is Monday, October 19, at 5 p.m.