

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

**September 10, 2020 – Virtual**

- **Call Meeting to Order**

Attendees:

Abby Lawlor Morycz  
Bethany Foster-Wilhelm  
Sarah Levinthal  
Heather Wechter  
Tim Reidy  
Ryan Brown, Junior Board Member  
Mindy Ranney, Commissioner  
Andrew Flynn, Commission liaison  
Bonnie Cross, Staff liaison

Absent:

Nora Alwine  
Natalie Uschner-Arroyo  
Hugh Beal, School Board Liaison

- **Public Comment:** None

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

- **ESB Business:**

- **Introduction** – Ryan Brown, Junior Board Member. Ryan was introduced and told a little about herself. She is on Student Council, a member of the Environmental Club, and plays the cello and bagpipes.
- **PA DEP Local Climate Action Plan.** Lydia Morin, Executive Director of CONNECT, and Eric Raabe, a University of Pittsburgh graduate student, were in attendance to discuss CONNECT's part in a regional CAP. As background, Lydia explained that CONNECT – Congress of Neighboring Communities -- is part of the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA) and has been active for about twelve years. It was created to allow communities to discuss topics of regional interest beyond their boundaries such as opioid addiction, ALCOSAN, and others. Eric explained that as a GSPIA graduate student working on his MPA, he was involved in the LCAP program when it started last year, working with various communities. He

assists by helping to gather data. Once all of the data is collected, the communities begin to form their plans.

Lydia explained that CONNECT wants to form a regional CAP with shared data. Using the data, an ongoing dashboard could be created to form a sustainability roadmap. CONNECT's purpose is to act as an incubator, not an owner. Commissioner Flynn is currently the Vice President of CONNECT and feels that Mt. Lebanon is well-positioned to contribute to the plan, which would also allow it to create a vehicle to gather data month-to-month and then move on to an EcoDistrict. He said that he hopes the ESB can take an active interest to help this move forward. Tim mentioned that the board was particularly interested in learning how to gather and sustain the data. Eric said that the data collection is standardized and he is working on a way to try and pull out municipal data. He is working on emissions as well. It was mentioned that perhaps there was the possibility of using the collected data to try and get air quality monitors. Andrew asked how the ESB could help. Lydia explained that CONNECT would like to form a task force that would work with a capstone class. People are needed that have expertise in these areas. Both Andrew and Heather said that they'd be glad to assist.

- **Climate Action Plan.** Regarding the regional CAP with CONNECT, Andrew inquired about timing of the data gathering. Eric responded that it would be available by the end of December or beginning of January, after which the community engagement aspect would occur in the Spring. At that time, targets would be developed. Right now, the regional plan would be developed. Plan drafts may be available by June 2021. Abby said that she would make some contacts to get input.
  - **Air Quality.** Abby reported that she did speak with Allegheny Health Department. She learned that Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) is conducting some study, but even if it was available, they couldn't use Mt. Lebanon data. Andrew felt that before getting to this, we would need to understand the various buckets involved.
  - **EcoDistricts.** Andrew outlined that this would take a lot of consensus-building. He spoke with Eric Milliron, the Commercial District Manager, who works with the Mt. Lebanon Partnership and the Economic Development Commission. Eric said that Anna Sifkin is on the EDC; she works at CMU and was involved with an EcoDistrict before. The groups were excited about the possibility. One route would be to get a small group to develop an initial framework to communicate what this is and to publicize it. A website should be established along with a communication plan. Just throwing around ideas, a kick-off event could be Earth Day 2021. There was a question regarding whether COVID-19 would skew the data; Eric Raabe said that it wouldn't because the base-year data would be 2018.
- **Commission Business:**
    - **Tree Program Initiatives.** Andrew reported that the Parks Board is ramping up their interest in understanding the urban tree canopy.
    - **Vibrant Uptown.** The first phase of design and framework is winding down. The next phase will be a more robust design along with community engagement. Andrew noted that he had asked about diverting storm water, but said that we

are at the top of the area and we don't have the available infrastructure to add anything.

- **New Business:**
  - Questions were asked regarding the progress of Bird Park; Andrew responded that it should be completed in the next couple of weeks.
  - Regarding a new recreation center, if done, would have to be on the site of the old one. A big consideration would be how to handle the skating rink since a lot of money had been put towards its renovation recently.
  
- **Adjournment.** Abby motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Tim, and unanimously approved by the members present.