

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

January 11, 2021 – Virtual

- **Call Meeting to Order**

Attendees:

Abby Lawler-Morycz
Heather Wechter
Tim Reidy
Natalie Uschner-Arroyo
Bethany Foster-Wilhelm
Sarah Levinthal
Ryan Brown, Junior Board Member
Andrew Flynn, Commission liaison
Bonnie Cross, Staff liaison

Absent:

Nora Alwine

- **Public Comment:** None

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

- **ESB Business:**

- **EcoDistrict Project – Update.** The core group did not meet, but it is important to understand boundaries. One idea was to use elementary schools because the organizational framework is in place (neighborhoods, PTAs). Work is being done on a vision statement and purpose. Sarah asked whether the faith community would be involved, and Andrew explained that to start, the core members are the key organizations that have a set authority, funding, and the ability to get grant money: municipality, schools, hospital, the Partnership and library. The next circle would include other organizations like the faith community, scout groups, etc.
- **Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act.** Andrew explained that the intent is to recommend that the Commission pass a resolution. The board members determined that they need a more complete understanding and tabled a decision until the next meeting.

- **PA DEP Local Climate Action Plan and Mt. Lebanon Climate Action Plan.** Eric Raabe has the data ready and needed an email to provide a link for the login. Andrew stated that Bonnie would have the email for the access. He also asked for additional data from staff, and the Finance department would be providing energy utilization bills. Sarah said that she reached out to Hugh Beal for their information and was told to contact the facilities manager. Andrew added that there will be a lot of data to enter in the system, but at the same time, we would also need to begin formulating the document. Abby added that we would need to determine short and long terms goals and calculate how we get there.

Andrew stated that the EcoDistrict is being formulated to bring people together. The CAP will look at tangible targets and the key steps over the next ten years, which will be part of the Comprehensive Plan. Andrew also wants to think more about how all of this accounts for the social cost of carbon using the CAP. Heather questioned how the goals of the plan would be fulfilled, i.e., accountability for the municipality. Andrew explained that it could be done through the budget process. An annual or bi-annual process would need to be formalized and someone would have to compile the information. Heather asked how the additional work would be done since there is no person in the municipality who does this, in addition to adding more work on staff. Andrew said that this would be a long-term exercise, but the start is that this needs to be embedded in the process – the ESB must recommend policy that guides the change.

Adding the EcoDistrict helps to market the internal and community accomplishments and recognition on a community-wide basis. Andrew also explained that he was working on a resolution and process for things to accomplish in the next several years. The draft has been given to Manager McGill, who feels that the next step is a public presentation. The resolution contains items such as renewable energy and market-based carbon pricing. These are big structures to put into place.

Other items discussed:

- Possibility of whether an intern could be used.
 - Group needs to get together offline to hammer out more details -- Andrew, Abby, Natalie and Heather
 - Use of the Forest Hills CAP as a template and augment with others when needed
- **High School Liaison Report.** Andrew suggested that the Environmental Club might assist with data input. Ryan said that Mr. Bergstressor wanted the club to get more involved and that she would ask him.

- **Vibrant Uptown.** The project is coming along. A presentation will be presented on 1/26/21, and approval is expected shortly. Construction is expected to start in May.
- **Other Business. A number of items were brought up:**
 - Abby asked whether the ESB wanted to continue submitting items to the magazine. The members agreed that they wanted to continue, especially since outreach would be

needed for the CAP. Sarah volunteered to come up items that others could help contribute.

- The 'Beast' machine – a complaint came up regarding air quality. Andrew will check on it with Public Works.
 - Glass recycling – Andrew said that the current pop-up locations would be continued.
 - CONNECT – Andrew advised that they were doing a 'Year of Discovery', followed by a year of doing things together on a regional basis.
 - Partnership – the municipality provided free parking spaces to allow people to stop and pick up take-out at restaurants.
- **Adjournment.** Abby motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Sarah, and unanimously approved by the members present.