

Town of New Lebanon
Comprehensive Plan Update Committee
Minutes – February 18, 2020 - corrected

Present: Jesse Newton, Deb Gordon, Cynthia Creech, David Farren, Jim Carroll, Greg Hanna, Tony Murad, Sharon Powers, Jeff Hattat and Ted Salem

1. Grant application – David reported that the Greenway grant was submitted 2/6. We do not know the timeframe for notification or actual award. Grant funds may only be spent on items procured/purchased after the grant award date so we may need to slow down consultant procurement. The Berkshire-Taconic grant is due March 1.

2. Town Board Priorities – At its Feb 11 meeting, the Town Board established priorities the progress toward which will be tracked at board meetings. The priorities, which do not necessarily bind this committee, are as follows:

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Lead</u>
Business/Economic Development	Deb
Market	
Entrepreneurs	
Water/Sewer Development	
Community Center	Tistrya
Town Assets/Infrastructure	Jesse
Comprehensive Plan / ZRC	Ted

3. Community Survey - The committee reviewed the survey instrument that Jim drafted. The 10 items will be rated on a scale: Critical – Important – Less Important. The survey form will provide space for name (optional). We will not ask for demographic information. It will also solicit interest in focus groups which will be organized around specific groups (e.g., seniors, sportsmen, school children). **Sharon and Deb will develop a list and provide to Jim by early next week. Jim will then circulate a revised draft survey within two weeks.**

The survey will be mailed to each household with instructions to encourage multiple HH members to fill it out. We will supplement a mailed survey with in-person booth at the mall and posting it to the town website and having copies available at the library, post office, etc. We will also use the survey to notify the public of the focus groups.

4. Focus Group Topics – Deb and Cynthia collapsed the ten topic areas into three focus group topics, however, after discussion, the committee decided to organize the focus groups around specific interest groups. See previous agenda item. The focus groups are intended to tease out community views about the overall strategies inherent in the list on the table, particularly those receiving more importance via the survey. .

5. List of Community groups – deferred, however, a request for information went out in the town newsletter and Grow the Valley.

6. Consultant Procurement – **Ted will develop an RFP** to obtain consulting services. The main tasks for the consultant are: update demographics and maps (as needed); facilitate community forum; draft action plan; facilitate public hearing.

7. Project Plan – Per item 2 above, the Comp Plan Re-Write is one of the Town Board priorities and it will be tracking progress against a project plan. The committee reviewed Ted's draft, based on the task schedule that David and Winfried put in the Greenway grant. The committee pushed back the time frames on some individual task items, however, left the July 2021 project completion date as is.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 17, 2020 at 6:30 PM at Town Hall. That is St. Patrick's Day; let me know if you wish to re-schedule the March meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Ted Salem, Chair

DRAFT – 1-22-2020

Takeaways from Previous Public Participation Surveys and Workshops

(2005 Comprehensive Plan; 2014 Behan Hamlet Revitalization, 2017 Library Community Conversations)

Residents want New Lebanon to provide:	Essential features:
A rural character/protect natural resources	open spaces, active farms, scenic roadways and view sheds, clean air and water, low density housing and commercial structures
A physically attractive place to live and work	well-maintained properties and structures; zoning rules enforced; design standards for structures/signs create positive “first impression” for travelers
An enriched lifestyle	community center (senior/youth/recreation center); recreational and social activities; historic and cultural resources and events; entertainment
A cohesive, caring community	trust, togetherness, tolerance for differing views/lifestyles; address varied housing, employment and social needs
A town center	a place to gather, interact, stroll and shop; safe, pedestrian-friendly; attracts
Ready access to the basics	grocery store and (or with) pharmacy
Sustainable economic development	serves the needs of the town and its environs; provides job opportunities for town residents, helps to lower property taxes
A destination for tourists/visitors	brings in “outside money;” creates jobs focus on recreational/natural resources benchmark event; board of tourism
Efficient, cost-effective and responsive public institutions	listen and respond to resident needs; enforce rules; effective town government, schools
Renewable energy opportunities	Facilitate solar, wind and other renewable, non-polluting energy