

Town of New Lebanon
Comprehensive Plan Update Committee
Minutes – March 17, 2020 Via tele-meeting

Present: Deb Gordon, Cynthia Creech, David Farren, Jim Carroll, Sharon Powers, Steven Muse, Winifried Fuchshofen and Ted Salem

1. Grant application – David reported that the granting agency notified Tistrya that the town will be awarded the \$10,000 Greenway grant, however, the award cannot be made until the agency is able to meet. Berkshire Taconic advised that it will delay decisions until at least mid- April
2. Community Survey - The committee made the following decisions regarding the survey:
 - The survey will be mailed to each household with instructions to make copies so that multiple household members may fill it out.
 - The survey should be administered sooner rather than later, while folks are looking for things to do during the current social distancing period.. Cynthia will check with the town on lead time for printing, and distribution.
 - The survey should go out with the newsletter; Cynthia will check with the town on this.
 - The survey will be available on the website as an interactive PDF. Sharon will work with Jim to prepare this. Cynthia will verify with town that this approach is ok.

Subsequent to the meeting, Cynthia made the following report-out:

Regarding our Committee discussion the evening of 3/17 re distribution of the Comp Plan Survey, I met with Tistrya and Marcie about Town involvement. I am writing from Town Hall now and as of 5pm today, there will be no staff here on a regular basis, so the information I write below may no longer apply. Regardless....

Our survey could indeed be included in the Town newsletter (goes to every resident receiving mail), which would normally go out 5/1. Need to get text and format to Marcie approx 3rd week of April.

Our survey can indeed be put on the Town website. Sharon could work with Marcie to accomplish that. Would need to be done from Marcie's computer. Fine to make it a pdf for folks to respond to. Tistrya sees no benefit to any reply by email being sent to the Town but rather that we set up a gmail account of our own.

The Clerk's office would receive and hold any surveys which are either handed in to that office or mailed in to that office. We can also direct that surveys can be put in the new drop box on the Hall porch during closed hours.

The survey can be available at Town Hall for people to pick up.

All of this may or may not be possible in another week, but for the moment this is the agreement we have.

3. Focus Group Topics – The committee approved Deb and Cynthia’s focus group groupings. Persons can “sign up” for as many groups as they wish, however, the committee will ultimately select participants for each grouping to keep the size manageable and obtain a balance of perspectives.
4. List of Community groups – Ted distributed via email Michelle’s listing just prior to the meeting. Members thinking of other groups should notify Michelle.
5. Consultant Procurement – Ted drafted the RFP to obtain consulting services. He asked one or two members to review it. (Subsequent to the meeting, Sharon and David provided feedback.) Deb noted that Conway School as a potential resource. Ted assured the committee that this was an open process and no particular consultant has an inside track.
7. Project Plan/ Impact on Health Situation on Project Schedule – There was general agreement that the committee should continue to plow ahead, including administration of the survey ASAP. It may be necessary to delay focus groups and other group activities, but it is too early to tell. David spoke with the Greenway grant folk and they expressed understanding that the project schedule provided in the application may need to be adjusted.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at 6:30 PM via tele-meeting. I’ll provide the phone and code information a day or so before the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Ted Salem, Chair