

FINAL

**CITY OF LEBANON
WEST LEBANON REVITALIZATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES, JUNE 8, 2021
REMOTE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS
LebanonNH.gov/Live
7:00PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jim Winny (Chair, City Council Rep.); Chet Clem (Vice-Chair); Graziella Parati; Gregorio Amaro; Kevin Purcell (Economic Development Commission Rep.); Laurel Stavis (Planning Board Rep.); Lauren Groves;

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dean Cashman;

STAFF PRESENT: David Brooks, Planning & Zoning Director

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Winny called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

A. Review of meeting procedures and NH RSA 91-A "Right-to-Know" requirements.

Mr. Brooks shared the State directive and participation details for the online meeting in Microsoft Teams. Chair Winny conducted a roll call attendance and speakers identified themselves.

Chair Winny noted the passing of Terri Dudley and recognized her service to the community.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. May 4, 2021 and May 11, 2021

A MOTION by Ms. Stavis to approve the May 4, 2021 and the May 11, 2021 Minutes as presented.

Seconded by Mr. Clem.

Roll Call Vote:

Members voting in favor included: Mr. Clem, Ms. Parati, Mr. Amaro, Mr. Purcell, Ms. Stavis, Ms. Groves, Chair Winny.

****The Motion was approved (7-0)***

3. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Outreach and Engagement Efforts

Mr. Amaro shared updated designs for branding West Lebanon and renderings of potential improvements. The committee discussed ensuring that diversity was represented and how to begin using the designs. Concerns were expressed about setting community expectations too high. It was noted that the renderings are based on designs shown in past plans. It was suggested that aspirational designs are appropriate, but need to include explanations about the steps that are needed to achieve the results.

Chair Winny noted that Planning staff would be working on a future presentation regarding the tools and techniques that can be used to enable and incentivize the types of improvements the community wishes to see.

B. Master Plan Chapter 4 (WLCBD) Actions and Strategies and Visioning Study Implementation Strategies

Mr. Brooks briefly reviewed the actions and strategies from the Visioning Study. The committee inquired about the status of the pending lease request for Westboro Yard and how the decision will be made. State Senator Prentiss suggested that advocacy should be focused toward NHDOT first, but that the final decision will rest with the Governor and Executive Council.

The committee discussed prioritizing efforts and resources, including advocating for City use of Westboro Yard and Seminary Hill School. There was also discussion about reuse of the West Lebanon Fire Station property. Other high priorities included achieving a West Lebanon greenway and improving streetscape aesthetics.

Concerns were expressed about how the City's capital spending could take away support for spending for the local schools. There was discussion about how capital spending is allocated around the City and whether Ward 1 receives its fair share of City spending.

A MOTION by Mr. Clem that the Committee request a mapping or quantitative determination from the City of capital expenditures as it relates to taxes to understand where Ward 1 falls.

Seconded by Mr. Purcell.

Roll Call Vote:

Members voting in favor included: Mr. Clem, Ms. Parati, Mr. Amaro, Ms. Groves, Ms. Stavis, Mr. Purcell, Chair Winny.

****The Motion was approved (7-0)***

It was suggested that a revived civic association or other advocacy group for West Lebanon should be an important goal since the Committee has a sunset date.

A MOTION by Mr. Clem that the Planning Department consider applying all recent zoning updates that were done elsewhere in town in terms of downtown West Lebanon and other districts, with a starting point being that all those amendments be considered for West Lebanon, to create equity and consistency across the City when it comes to height, dimension, etc. in order to incentivize development equally across the City.

Seconded by Ms. Stavis.

Roll Call Vote:

Members voting in favor included: Mr. Clem, Ms. Parati, Mr. Amaro, Mr. Purcell, Ms. Stavis, Ms. Groves, Chair Winny.

****The Motion was approved (7-0)***

C. Lebanon Rotary Discussion

Chair Winny summarized prior discussions about the Lebanon Rotary Club's proposed community gift for its 100th anniversary, including the Seminary Hill School, Westboro Yard, streetscaping improvements, or Bridge Street Park. It was noted that if Rotary wishes to make the gift during 2021, then some potential projects may not fit as well with that goal. The committee agreed that if Rotary's goal is to create a music venue, then they may want to wait for further actions in Westboro Yard or at Seminary Hill School, but if the goal is to give a 100th anniversary gift in 2021, then Bridge Street Park or the Greenway are potential projects. Chair Winny and Ms. Stavis noted they would prepare a response to Rotary.

4. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Coordination with Arts & Culture Commission

Chair Winny has been communicating with Arts & Culture Commission Chair Jessica Giordani about coordinating efforts to brighten up and draw attention to West Lebanon. The Commission meets on June 22nd at 6:30pm. Chair Winny also noted a possibility of having a joint meeting with the Economic Development Commission.

5. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Discussion on potential West Lebanon TIF District

Mr. Brooks gave a brief summary of how TIF Districts work and described the recently-created Airport TIF district as an example. It was noted that streetscape improvements can be funded with TIF revenue, but those types of improvements do not directly enable new development or generate increased property values. While the City does capture 100% of the increment in its existing districts, the City could choose to capture a smaller percentage so that some portion of the increased taxes would still go to the School District and Grafton County.

It was suggested that there are enough similarities between Downtown and West Lebanon to justify West Lebanon having a TIF district. Mr. Clem commented on the proposed River Park project in relation to a potential West Lebanon TIF district.

A MOTION by Ms. Stavis that the West Lebanon Revitalization Advisory Committee suggest to the City Council that a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District be developed for downtown West Lebanon.

Seconded by Mr. Purcell.

Roll Call Vote:

Members voting in favor included: Mr. Clem, Ms. Parati, Mr. Amaro, Ms. Groves, Ms. Stavis, Mr. Purcell, Chair Winny.

****The Motion was approved (7-0)***

Mr. Clem summarized the results of coalition building in support of a West Lebanon greenway.

Chair Winny noted that the City will be returning to in-person meetings. The committee agreed to change its regular meeting schedule to 7:00pm on the second and fourth Tuesdays.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

A MOTION by Ms. Stavis to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by Mr. Purcell.

Roll Call Vote:

Members voting in favor included: Mr. Clem, Mr. Cashman, Ms. Parati, Mr. Amaro, Ms. Groves, Ms. Stavis, Mr. Purcell, Chair Winny.

****The Motion was approved (7-0)***

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,
David Brooks
Planning & Development Director