

FINAL

LEBANON CITY COUNCIL
3rd QUARTER BOARDS/COMMITTEE REPORTS
MINUTES

Wednesday, November 3 2021, 6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers or

Remote Via Microsoft Teams: [LebanonNH.gov/Live](https://lebanonnh.gov/live)

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Tim McNamara, Assistant Mayor Clifton Below, Erling Heistad, Karen Liot Hill, George Sykes, Douglas Whittlesey, Devin Wilkie, Jim Winny (arrived at 6:54 PM), and Karen Zook

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Shaun Mulholland, City Clerk Kristin Kenniston, GIS Coordinator Mark Goodwin

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mayor McNamara called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Planning Board Updates – Chair Bruce Garland

The PB has been working to update the regulations to make sure they are current and as straightforward as possible in order to simplify the process. Two examples are:

1. Our regulations used to have some items referring to fire. It became clear the PB was not competent in and would never be able to keep up with fire regulations, so this was outsourced to the Lebanon Fire Department. The LFD now has the responsibility to comment on each application and tell us if there are additional conditions that need to be applied on building permits, etc.
2. We have added a Minor Site Review Committee. The idea being to outsource this to a group (one from Fire, one from Public Works, and one from Police) for small projects. The hope is that this will make the process a lot cheaper and quicker for people.

Needless to say, when we finalized these new regulations, we had some pushback from developers. He tried to impress on them that we were not trying to increase the burden, but rather do the opposite.

Arts & Culture Commission Updates – Chair Jessica Giordani

- The Arts & Culture Commission has reviewed and approved two applications from the public to install public art throughout the City. One was from a local sculpture that was installed at the west end of the mall, and another one was from a local abstract artist whose theme is “A Return Nature,” who placed a series of canvasses along the Rail Trail corridor.
- There has been progress on the long-term project for installing poetry on sidewalks in the City and they have been working with a consultant from St. Paul, Minnesota, and coordinating with the Department of Public Works to get the poetry installed. The Commission has also collaborated with City librarians to help select the poetry for our initial installations.
- Lite Up Leb.
- Soofa signs have been installed.
- Banners that will be installed around Colburn Park and Downtown West Lebanon will be going to the printer this week.
- They have been consulting with the Kilton Library regarding a project installed in the Teen Room.

- Tunnel Art will be unveiled on December 4th, time TBD.

Pedestrian/Bicyclist Advisory Committee Updates – Chair Colin Smith

- Two members of the Pedestrian/Bicyclist Advisory Committee will be serving on the new City Multi-Mobile Plan, which is a project being led by the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission.
- They have been participating in the NH DOT's Rte. 120 Project (Hanover St./Rte. 120). The main drive of this is the interstate project to deal with congestion there.
- They have been reviewing the long list of projects the consultants have developed over the last couple of meetings and have made recommendations for a couple of the intersections that are part of the project such as at the intersection at Etna Road and Rte. 120 where there is currently no crosswalk, and the section at Hanover St./Rte. 120 to look at safe crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- The crossing and path off Rte. 4, close to the Middle School and to the Rail Trail, has been completed.
- The Shepard Trail, going from the Rail Trail to the swimming pool, will be completed.
- The Committee continues to work on communications with the public and are working on safety notices for winter that will be placed in LebNews.

Conservation Commission Updates – Vice Chair Sarah Riley

- The Conservation Commission has had one permit review where they looked at the Lahaye multi-use path and the wetland impact along that road.
- Chair Oidtmann has also been involved with the NH DOT Rte. 120 project looking at the wetland impacts, opportunities for wildlife passage, and the use of vegetation instead of brick traffic islands.
- The Commission worked with Rotary in the cleanup of the Mascoma River.
- The Commission is getting ready to finalize their Open Space Plan.
- This past quarter has been devoted to looking at City conservation properties in more depth. This included deep dives into Baker's Crossing; Mascoma; Chambers Memorial Reserve along the Connecticut River; The Alana Coal Conservation area; the east Wilder boat launch; and the Goodwin Conservation area.
- In September/October they looked at the Goodwin Conservation area and are now involved in building a new replacement bridge across Great Brook at the site of the old bridge.
- An ecologically sensitive area in the City, which is the Floodplain Forest by the Wastewater Treatment Facility boat launch. The DPW has blocked off access to vehicles on a portion of this property at the confluence of the Mascoma River/Connecticut River to prevent further damage to this area.

Class 6 Roads Advisory Committee – Councilor Heistad

Councilor Heistad noted the difficulties this Committee is having on getting their recommendations for various roads on the Council's agenda, noting there is one road that goes back to the 1980's where no action by the Council has been taken. None of the roads the Committee has reviewed in the last two years have been acted on by the Council. The Committee decided they should not go forward with any more recommendations until we can see movement by the Council going forward. They have also been working on signage but cannot complete this project until we know the Council will be acting on those.

Mayor McNamara was uncertain why they would not be getting on the Council's agenda and the City Manager will follow-up with the Chair.

The Committee has 7 more roads to go, but the challenge is trying to address property owners' concerns of land that abuts the City rights-of-way while also trying to maintain the rights-of-way that the City owns. Often, the property owner is not aware there is right-of-way across their property or that they abut a City right-of-way.

Economic Development Commission Updates – Councilor Liot Hill presented updates in the absence of Chair Bill Dunn

- They have been examining employer retention and growth practices with the Upper Valley Business Alliance and learning from them about what their challenges are and how the City can better help them with retention and growth.
- They will be working with the Downtown TIF Advisory Board starting in the new year to revisit the concepts that were brought forward for the redevelopment of the back parking areas. The drawings done are now 6-years old and the idea is to get together with the TIF Board to get a sense of where we stand now and if this initiative is worth pursuing.
- The former Lebanon Village Market property has been purchased and the new owner is talking about doing a mixed use redevelopment of that site. A presentation was given to them by the new owner/developer.
- There was discussion about the Fire Station and whether there is potential to move to a consolidated Fire Station that could free up the current Fire Station in Lebanon for redevelopment.
- Looking at more ways to promote Soofa sign use to benefit local businesses.
- With relation to Downtown West Lebanon, a lot of people have said they would like to see Main Street improved so they have been looking into opportunities to provide a mini-grant program which would encourage building owners to make improvements that would have a beautification impact on Main Street.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Commission (DEI): Councilor Liot Hill

- Councilors Zook, Wilkie and Liot Hill interviewed 8 people. They will be recommending that all 8 be appointed by the Council. This will be a dynamic group and each person brings an interesting background and perspectives.
- The first meeting of the DEI Commission will be taking place around the beginning of 2022.

Downtown TIF Advisory Committee – Councilor Sykes

Councilor Sykes did not have a full report, but noted that over the last quarter funds have actually gone into this account. They are looking forward to the collaboration with the Economic Development Commission.

Lebanon Energy Advisory Committee (LEAC) – Assistant Mayor Below

- The Lebanon Community Power Plan has been adopted.
- Board members of The Community Power Coalition of NH Incorporated, and their credentials, was announced.
- Several members of LEAC have been participating in online workshops with a group from Connecticut who have been working with municipalities and communities on different aspects of electric vehicles and the implications involved.

- Started working on preplanning of the Climate Action Plan and have been reviewing other communities adopted action plans.
- One interesting topic that came up is that maybe a Climate Action Plan should be developed separately from an update to the Energy Chapter of the Master Plan.
- They will be looking at updating Building Codes to the most recent version, which would involve enabling new building techniques that are sometimes more cost effective and energy efficient.

Assistant Mayor Below explained there is an International Building Code and the State of NH has only got around to at least one version of this code. He noted that municipalities can adopt the more recent versions of the code but not the codes that are less stringent than those adopted by the State of NH and explained the differences between the two.

Councilor Liot Hill suggested the Economic Development Commission and LEAC should meet together to discuss the impacts Building Codes and Regulations have on the cost of development in (Lebanon) in order make a joint recommendation to the Council.

Councilor Winny arrived at 6:54 PM.

Heritage Commission – Councilor Wilkie gave updates due to the absence of the Chair.

- Three (3) new members have been added to the Commission.
- Discussed using 3D Cameras for Dana House that could be used for educational purposes.
- They have received the final report for the certified local government report for the Historic District Expansion and have accepted that report that included a few new buildings that have now met the threshold for inclusion.
- They have also begun issuing Landmark Designation Properties.
- They have begun discussions about what they can do next year, including adding a new Historic District.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:56 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Dona E. Gibson
Recording Secretary