

One Londonderry Steering Committee Minutes
Thursday, June 3, 2021, 4 PM via zoom

Present: Andrew Rackear, Gail Mann, Esther Fishman, Patty Eisenhaur, Larry Gubb, Bruce Frauman, Elsie Smith, and guests Hilary Batchelor and Helen Hamman. Excused: Martha Dale

Esther called the meeting to order at 4:05

Website: Gail introduced the new One Londonderry (OL) website to the group. The group was extremely enthusiastic saying that it really expresses the community vision for OL. Gail said the site is largely complete, with the exception of a few small tweaks. If anyone has any simple edits they should send them to Gail. After that Hilary will be taking over management responsibility for the site. Esther suggested that committee members share the site with friends who are not that familiar with OL to get some objective comments. The group also agreed that the tag line should be changed to a line from the mission statement: "A citizen-driven initiative to build a vital Londonderry." Elsie and Esther will look closely at the copy on the site to make sure it represents OL as independent from the Town of Londonderry.

Group Updates:

- *Economic Vitality:* Gail noted that Londonderry's restaurants are struggling. Several may not reopen after the pandemic. She also said there are three properties on Main Street that are for sale and the committee is looking at ways to ensure these properties continue as viable businesses. Andrew said the group is also looking at creating a welcome wagon to connect businesses with new residents. Lastly, Andrew reported that he is attending a BDCC webinar on funding for companies that lost money during the pandemic; he will share relevant information with the local businesses.
- *Housing:* Patty said this group is meeting biweekly. They are researching and benchmarking key ideas on housing. They have met with Windham-Windsor Housing Trust and BDCC. A key take away thus far is that a more formal housing assessment on Londonderry's stock and needs is critical to get the concrete data the group needs. Grant funding may be available for this. The group is also exploring how to get information into property owner's hands about financing opportunities for repairs to properties so they can rent or sell their homes, if desired. Lastly, they are learning about incentives that other towns and states have used to improve their housing stock.
- *Village Main Streets:* Larry said this group has not met recently because they were waiting for the Selectboard to choose a consultant for the Main Street Master Plan. The group will be part of the outreach team the consultants meet with when they begin their work.
- *Community Center:* Jane Hewson is leading the members of this group through a process to identify both short term, actionable activities and a longer term vision for what a community center might look like. The group is looking for a chair.
- *Recreation:* No report this month.

Mission Statement: The steering committee approved the mission statement as submitted with one change: The sub head will read "A citizen-drive Initiative to build a vital Londonderry."

Community Fund for Londonderry: Elsie said the CFL has instituted a grant process to review and award requests from both One Londonderry groups and others seeking funding for community projects. Thus far CFL has acted as a fiscal agent for the Friends of Main Street (who provide the planters around town) and has funded the One Londonderry website. CFL will be doing a "soft launch" fundraising campaign targeted at One Londonderry participants and friends to test the fundraising waters. The campaign will make an appeal for the town signs, the trail map/brochure and seasonal decorations.

Selectboard Presentation: Esther reported that she, Elsie and Susan Collins from the CFL met with Tom Cavanagh and Melissa Brown to discuss OL, CFL and where town activities overlap. Tom said it was very important to make clear that OL is independent of the town in every way. OL/CFL agreed to write a disclaimer stating this independence; this will appear on all materials. Tom and Melissa also said that regular and on-going communications with the Selectboard will insure transparency, limit duplication and insure that all projects move forward in an appropriate and authorized manner. To that end, OL will appear on the Selectboard agenda for the second meeting of the month. The steering committee agreed that a different working group should present its progress each month.

Other Business: The Planning Commission, the DRB and the Energy Commission all have a vacancy.

Next Meeting: Thursday, July 22 at 9 AM.

The meeting adjourned at 5:10

Respectfully submitted, Elsie Smith