

The City of Lewes



City Manager's Report

October 2018

Construction Progress

There are a number of significant construction projects underway in Lewes. City staff have participated in progress meetings on these projects.

- Mariners Retreat/Highland Acres Tax Ditch Improvements – Progress meetings were held on both the tax ditch and Mariners Retreat project. Funding is in place for the completion of the tax ditch project. The pipe is being ordered, and the project should be completed this fall. Site contractors have been working on installing the sanitary sewer in Mariners Retreat.
- Fourth Street Crack Sealing and Patching/Tennessee Avenue – Crack sealing on Fourth Street was completed during October, and several large patches were underway as October closed. Tennessee Avenue paving is completed with the exception of final seeding of the area adjacent to the roadway.
- Savannah Place Sanitary Sewer Extension – This is a Lewes Board of Public Works project to extend sanitary sewer to Savannah Place. Reconstruction of Savannah Circle will be completed as part of this project. The bid was awarded to Teal Construction. A number of preliminary meetings were held regarding this project, including a meeting with residents of Hulling Cove, where a new sewer pump station will be installed as part of this project.
- Streets Department Break Room – On October 26th, Mayor and City Council approved a bid for creation of a new Streets Department break room submitted by EDiS. The break room will be located in the pole building on Schley Avenue across from the shop/garage building. Construction will take place during the winter.
- Beach 2 Restroom – On October 26th, Mayor and City Council approved a bid for renovations to the Beach 2 restroom submitted by Willow Construction. The restroom will remain a seasonal restroom, but the renovation will update the restroom, as it is very dated.

Parking Activities

The parking committees for the beach and downtown areas have continued to meet. On October 15th, Mayor Becker and I met with Jed Hatfield from Colonial Parking and staff from EDiS to discuss how and where a parking garage might fit in downtown Lewes. This meeting was initiated by EDiS following an article in the *Cape Gazette* regarding the possibility of a parking garage. At the meeting we discussed the activities of the Downtown Parking Committee and their background in parking garage construction and management.

Staff have continued to gather and review information for replacement of the city's parking meters. This information was presented to Mayor and City Council at a meeting regarding Capital Projects

on October 26th. Mayor and City Council expressed a preference for proceeding with a meter layout similar to what we have in place now, including station meters for parking lots and single-head meters for on-street parking. Staff is in the process of finalizing pricing information from vendors for presentation to City Council in November. The meter replacement is planned to be completed prior to May 1, 2019.

Land Development/Annexation Activities

Staff continued to have discussions with developers about prospective projects during September.

- Mayor and City Council approved the Newsham Annexation at 1151 Savannah Road on October 16th. Lewes Planning Commission subsequently recommended approval of a minor subdivision to combine this parcel with the larger Beebe parcel fronting Savannah Road and to adjust the lot line between the two portions of the Beebe property.
- Staff, along with the Lewes BPW staff and engineers from GMB, have continued to review the Fishers Cove subdivision application received for property off of Pilottown Road and Rodney Avenue. Staff have spoken with a number of property owners in the vicinity of the proposal about their concerns.
- Mayor and City Council held a public hearing on the proposed annexation and zoning of the Brittingham Property on New Road. The record was left open until 4:00 p.m. on Monday, November 5th.
- The Planning Office and Lewes Planning Commission have been diligently working to review the city's zoning ordinance and develop recommended amendments. This effort is part of the comprehensive plan implementation.
- The committee formed by Mayor and City Council to work on consolidating the Commercial Architectural Review Commission and the Historic Preservation Commission has completed their work to consolidate the two commissions. They have provided their report and a proposed ordinance to Mayor and City Council.

Five Points Working Group

The Five Points Working Group met twice in October. On October 8th, the working group prioritized recommendations. On October 29th, the working group held its final meeting of this phase of the project. At this meeting, the working group approved the final report to DelDOT and Sussex County and heard from Secretary Jennifer Cohan and County Administrator Todd Lawson about the next steps in the process.

New Road Master Plan

Jim Klein, Delaware Greenways, and DelDOT staff continued work on some road design concepts to share with the stakeholders at the stakeholder meeting on October 24th. During this meeting, there was productive dialogue among participants about the design strategies to help calm traffic and reduce travel speeds on New Road. The ideas discussed will be presented at a public workshop on November 27th from 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at the Cape Henlopen High School.

Railroad Right-of-Way

Residents along DelDOT's railroad right-of-way have expressed concern about the appearance of the right-of-way following the removal of the railroad tracks. They have approached the City, as have Christine Besche and Candace Vessella (park commissioners for Stango Park and Stango Park

Extended), about developing a plan to beautify the right-of-way. We have also received complaints about vehicles using the rail bed.

In response to the concerns, Mayor Becker and I met with Secretary Cohan and other DelDOT staff to discuss the condition of the right-of-way. DelDOT has committed to removing the ballast in the twenty-foot adjacent to the roadways. This work has begun. They have also begun to develop cost estimates for removing the ballast and will follow up with the City as we move forward.

Departmental Operations

- *Use of Margaret H. Rollins Community Center Meeting Room* – Six (6) organizations held a total of eight (8) meetings and events in the City’s meeting room during the month of October.
- *Refuse Collection Totals for October*
 - Recycling – 38.36 tons
 - Beach Cleaning/Street Cleaning –None
 - Regular Trash - 87 tons
 - Yard Waste – 37.79 tons
- *New Business Licenses Issued* – 4
- *Building Permits Issued*
 - New Home - 1
 - Residential Renovation – 44
 - Commercial Renovation – 2
 - Storage Container – 1
 - Curb Cut – 1

Other Meetings and Activities

On October 3rd, I attended a meeting in Rehoboth Beach regarding the Community Resiliency Partnership project led by Rehoboth Beach and funded by Delaware Coastal Programs.

Mayor Becker and I had an interview with *Business View Magazine* regarding Lewes. They will be featuring Lewes in a future issue of the magazine.

I continued to meet with the Lewes Community Gardeners to work on a sublease within the Great Marsh Park.

Darrin Gordon and I met with staff from Century Engineering regarding connecting the trail on the rail bed east of the canal with American Legion Road. They have provided a design and are working the DNREC to determine if it will be completed this fall as a part of DNREC’s trail construction between the canal and Cape Henlopen State Park.

On October 12th, the City hosted a reception for Lewes in Bloom to celebrate the international recognition of Lewes by the Communities in Bloom competition. Lewes competed with communities in Canada and Europe for this well-deserved recognition.

On October 17th, Alice Erickson, Ellen Lorraine McCabe and I had an on-line meeting with Civic Plus to discuss content and design for our website update.

On October 23rd, I participated in a focus group for the Lewes Board of Public Works Strategic Plan. Several members of City Council attended as well.

Training:

- Ellen Lorraine McCabe and I participated in a webinar of the International City/County Management Association entitled *10 Ways to a Sound Council-Manager Relationship*.

- On October 24th, I attended the regional conference held by the Delaware Chapter of the American Planning Association. Tom West also attended the conference on October 23rd and 24th.
- On October 30th, Ellen Lorraine McCabe and I attended Winter Road Maintenance training offered by the University of Delaware's T² Center.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ann Marie Townshend".

Ann Marie Townshend, AICP
City Manager