

The City of Lewes



City Manager's Report

August 2019

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** – Construction continues on infrastructure and houses in Mariners Retreat. The construction on infrastructure is expected to be completed in the fall.
- **Savannah Place Sewer Extension** – The extension of sewer in Savannah Place continued, as well as the reconstruction of the street. This project will finish in September, and residences will be connected to sewer beginning in October.
- **Savannah Road Bridge Maintenance** – Work has begun on the Savannah Road bridge maintenance. This work will continue through the spring. It will include evening lane closures and sidewalk closures on one side of the bridge.
- **Savannah Road Bicycle Safety Improvements** – DelDOT will begin work on the bicycle improvement project on Savannah Road between the bridge and American Legion Road in late September. When complete, Savannah Road will have bike lanes in both directions.

Land Development/Annexation Activities

Staff, along with the Planning Commission and Mayor and City Council, continued to work on reviewing development projects and supporting other planning priorities during August.

- The Planning Commission met twice in August.
 - On August 19th, the Planning Commission reviewed the Lewes Waterfront Preserve Major Subdivision application and granted preliminary consent. They also reviewed the Site Plan application for Dutchman Harvest, and forwarded a recommendation for approval to Mayor and City Council.
 - On August 21st, the Planning Commission reviewed a Minor Subdivision application for property at the corner of Kings Highway and Devries Circle, and recommended approval to Mayor and City Council. They also completed public hearings on Fishers Cove and Whites Pond Meadow. They will continue deliberation on these applications this fall.

- Mayor and City Council approved amendments to the annexation zones at their meeting on August 12th.

Departmental Operations

- *Use of Margaret H. Rollins Community Center Meeting Room* – Three (3) organizations held a total of eight (8) meetings and events in the City’s meeting room during the month of August.
- *Use of Net House* – Five (5) organizations held a total of six (6) meetings and events in the Net House during the month of July.
- *Refuse Collection Totals for July*
 - Recycling – 53.11 tons
 - Regular Trash – 185.32 tons
 - Yard Waste – 29.4 tons
 - Beach Rake/Street Sweeping – 17.55 tons
- *New Business Licenses Issued* – 9
- *Building Permits Issued*
 - Residential Renovation – 28
 - New Home – 7
 - Accessory Structure – 3
 - Demolition - 3
 - Solar Panels – 1
 - Commercial Renovation – 1
 - Cellular – 1

Mitigation Planning Efforts

On August 1st, the City had a meeting with the Olson Group, who is working on the Re-entry Plan component of the City’s Emergency Operations Plan. Joe Thomas, from Sussex County, also attended the meeting. One of the recommendations of the Re-entry Plan will be for the City to become part of a network called CERRA, which is a national credentialing system for re-entry. The Re-Entry Plan should be completed this fall and will be brought forward to Mayor and City Council.

The Mitigation Planning Team met on August 13th. At this meeting Chatham Marsch, of the Police Department, provided an updated on the City’s phragmites control efforts. Several marsh areas in town have recently been sprayed with Rodeo to kill the phragmites. In the future, there will be areas of controlled burn in the marsh. This marsh management effort reduces the fire hazard associated with phragmites and improves the natural function of the marsh. Phragmites is an invasive plant that can push out native vegetation and other marsh life.

At the Mitigation Planning Team meeting, there was also a detailed discussion of the Lewes Flood Study recently completed by AECOM.

Professional and Organizational Development

Our staff have been working on city-wide professional and organizational development. We created an Employee Engagement Committee, who met for the first time in August. The charge of the Committee is to bring forward recommendations to improve the level of employee engagement in the City of Lewes. We are also working to enhance the work environment. This is an on-going process that involves our entire workforce. Research shows that as employee engagement increases, productivity also increases. We know that we have great employees who provide excellent services to the people of Lewes, and we look forward to improving the quality of the services we provide.

The City is also in the process of developing a Safety Committee to work on developing safety policies and procedures for the workforce. This committee will also recommend safety training for City employees. We will be working with our insurance carrier to get this committee active.

Other Meetings and Activities

- On August 2nd, the managers of the coastal towns met to discuss ideas for the direction of the Association of Coastal Towns over the next year. This was followed by a meeting of the mayors and managers of the towns on August 30th.
- The City's Finance Committee met on August 8th.
- Alison Kirk, Parks and Marina Administrator, hosted a meeting including Lewes in Bloom and the Lewes Chamber of Commerce to discuss the project of improvements to the Second Street bump-outs. The project will move forward in mid-September.
- Phillip Moore, Planner, and I met with residents from Highland Acres and walked Sussex Drive to discuss their ideas for streetscape improvements on Sussex Drive between Savannah Road and Highland Acres. The ideas of these residents were shared at the public hearing for Shields Elementary School on September 4th. The Traffic Safety Committee will take up this issue at their October meeting.
- Ellen Lorraine McCabe and I had a conference call with Host Compliance to discuss the services they offer to help find unlicensed short-term rental properties.
- Charlie O'Donnell of GMB and I met with a resident of Gills Neck Road to discuss drainage issues that are affecting her property. GMB is monitoring the situation during rain events to see if they can identify the source of the problem and propose some solutions.
- Ellen Lorraine McCabe and I had a conference call with Enterprise Fleet Management regarding green vehicle options. The 2014 leases are up, and we are looking at more environmentally friendly vehicles as we rotate the older vehicles out.
- Mayor Becker, Pres Lee, Darrin Gordon and I met with Chesapeake Utilities to discuss progress in expanding gas service in Lewes. They have been gathering applications for service in the Reserves at Pilottown and Pilottown Park.
- I met with Sue Sandmeyer regarding Art in Bloom's interest in installing mosaics on the Savannah Road bridge. They have made progress in working with DelDOT and will be addressing Mayor and City Council on September 9.
- Deputy Mayor Fred Beaufait, Councilperson Dennis Reardon, and I met with Jeff Niezgodra (DelDOT) and Pat Cooper (DNREC) about the cross walks on Cape Henlopen

Drive and the concerns in favor of and opposition to lighting the roadway and/or the crosswalks. There are six crosswalks from Cape May Lewes Ferry to Cape Henlopen State Park and no street lighting. Many Cape Shores residents have expressed concern about adding lighting to the roadway, while others have requested lighting to address safety concerns with people crossing Cape Henlopen Drive at night. The Traffic Safety Committee is evaluating the issue, and there is no recommendation yet regarding how to address the matter.

- Staff is working on an update to the personnel manual. This has been an ongoing project, and we hope to have it completed by the end of this calendar year.
- Phillip Moore and I attended a meeting of the Resilient Community Partnership on August 27th. At this meeting, AECOM reviewed the BMP manual developed, and KCI provided an update on their work to provide guidance on ordinance improvements.

Respectfully Submitted,

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

Ann Marie Townshend,
AICP City Manager