

Imagine if downtown Gettysburg was ...

"Main Street Gettysburg" with Deb Adamik | Posted: Tuesday, September 15, 2015 12:04 am

Imagine if anyone entering into downtown through Baltimore, Chambersburg, Carlisle and York Street gateways were welcomed with the beauty of the vintage lighting, brick sidewalks and beautiful flowers that currently line Steinwehr Avenue. Imagine that the Historic Pathway from the Gettysburg Railroad Station to the National Cemetery was attractively identified and lined with engraved bricks, waysides and educational medallions that highlight Lincoln's inspirational visit. Imagine if by Main Street Gettysburg (MSG) and the borough working jointly together, we could resolve many of the overall business related challenges such as parking, communications and business friendly ordinances? Imagine if these improvements created a foundation for MSG to help recruit and welcome new businesses downtown that were complimentary to the existing business mix, while also building a strong network of communications between our mainstay businesses? This is the ten year vision that MSG will pursue for the borough called "Historic Pathways to Success."

This ten-year vision was drafted in 2014 and approved in 2015 based on the community's input through four community retreats, several focus groups and various information gathering venues hosted by MSG since 2010. MSG met with many community leaders, the borough staff and council members, and various organizations to gauge their support. By listening to the community MSG created priority projects for this vision that began with the Baltimore Street Historic Pathway Revitalization Project.

MSG has a successful track record with turning revitalization planning into reality, illustrated by the Interpretive Plan and Steinwehr Avenue projects. MSG combines historic preservation, downtown economic development and revitalization projects into successful projects that enhance the design and amenities of downtown. It is MSG's non-profit status that opens doors of funding opportunities to make these beautification and infrastructure enhancements possible and at a reduced cost to the Borough's tax payers.

Successful revitalization projects involve not just a project plan, funding and means to carry-out the project but the leadership skills to form a community of stakeholders that work effectively together. Enthusiastic and committed community members are paramount and this is where the Baltimore Street community shines. MSG currently has a database of over 100 emails and contact information from the Baltimore Street corridor. There are 33 active members who have requested to be involved in the revitalization of the Baltimore Street project, and an events committee of over 15 members.

The Baltimore Street Historic Pathway Preservation Project Events Committee's first project is on Friday evening, Oct. 2, where they invite the entire community to come downtown and enjoy an evening out and learn about their plans for Baltimore Street. They are hosting an event called "Steppin' Out in Lincoln's Footsteps" from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. that will have food, music, fun activities

and even a little bit of history. This will be in conjunction with GARMA's First Friday event and "Salsa On the Square" from 5 p.m. until 11 p.m.. It will be a free fun evening for everyone and we encourage the community to come downtown to rediscover the many fine businesses we have, as well as learn about the future plans for our downtown. Most importantly come and have a full evening of fun! For more information you can contact Main Street Gettysburg at 337-3491 or info@mainstreetgettysburg.org.

Deb Adamik is president and CEO of Main Street Gettysburg.