

Importance of revitalization grows

Posted: Tuesday, July 21, 2015 12:02 am

Over the past several weeks, there have been numerous unrelated conversations and situations that have all underscored the increasing importance of the Baltimore Street Revitalization Project (BSRP).

The BSRP is a grass roots project with a committee of about 26 community residents, business owners and property owners from Lincoln Square south to the Borough line at the cemetery. The mission of the project is to improve the economy, create jobs and enhance the quality of life within the Baltimore Street District. The goals include increasing business opportunities, growth in property values, developing employment prospects, recruiting new businesses, and improving safety, livability and mobility for a more beautiful landscape. Arts and culture will be a major focus, along with showcasing the historical significance of the area and improving the sidewalks and lighting. An important by-product will be a sense of community identity and pride.

On June 25, Main Street Gettysburg facilitated a community input meeting for the BSRP. Thirty community members gathered on a rainy evening and discussed their hopes and dreams for improving Baltimore Street. Safe sidewalks and increased lighting were most important on a long list of ideas. The group represented a wide variety of businesses, residents, organizations and public representatives and the energy was positive and committed to change.

One of the goals for Baltimore Street is to attract new businesses. The recent holiday weekend illustrated that the growing assortment of businesses in town is working. As I walked the streets and talked to people, it was evident that the new shops and restaurants were enhancing the town. Hats off to Alex Hayes, Managing Editor of the Gettysburg Times, for recognizing the positive growth of Gettysburg's downtown businesses. Alex also recognized the importance of the revitalization projects like Steinwehr and Baltimore Street that attract new businesses and patrons to the area.

In a recent Community Development conversation regarding the Gettysburg Crossing Project, Charles Gable, Borough Manager, emphasized the necessity for our businesses and borough to be proactive in facing the competition of any major development surrounding the town. On the heels of that discussion, the Borough Council approved (7-1 vote) a \$5,000 contribution for matching funds toward a Master Plan for the BSRP. This investment illustrated their understanding of the significance this project will have in keeping the downtown competitive with surrounding development. This revitalization will create an attractive backdrop to draw restaurants and shops that our community wants and jobs that accompany this growth.

Additionally, during the Borough meeting, Wendy Allen, Lincoln Into Art, gave a compelling speech about the history and stories of the citizens that lived on Baltimore Street. The presentation was a

reminder of the emotional connection that Baltimore Street creates through its historical significance.

MSG serves the Baltimore Street Committee as a facilitator, grant seeker and project manager. All of the situations mentioned showcases the importance of the Baltimore Street project. While it is Baltimore Street's turn to revitalize, MSG believes it is important to maintain solid connections throughout the various communities within Gettysburg and works to keep communications strong. The town is evolving and it needs to continue to compete with free enterprise. As an economic arm, MSG applauds everyone working hard to keep this momentum going.

Deb Adamik is president and CEO of Main Street Gettysburg.