

Stepping up to improve our town

Posted: Tuesday, August 16, 2016 12:06 am

It has been just over a year since Main Street Gettysburg (MSG) moved into Gettysburg's municipal building. In that timeframe, MSG has seen first hand and further appreciates, the demands and responsibilities placed upon the municipal staff and council. The collaborative relationship between MSG and the borough staff has grown stronger and by working together, this new relationship offers opportunities to leverage the workload and reduce expenses to the borough.

Keeping the community engaged is important for the municipality so they can make sound decisions based upon the greater needs of the community, but the time required to do this is demanding. MSG has two employees, one full time and one part time, so recruiting the community's involvement is necessary for MSG to achieve its mission of preserving our history and enhancing our economy. As the economic arm for the borough, MSG can share its community insight based upon the Steinwehr Business Improvement District, Baltimore Street community through the Baltimore Street Revitalization project, and the businesses and property owners on Route 30. MSG is working with the Route 30 corridor community to create another neighborhood focus for revitalizing the east/west gateways into town. In addition, MSG stays in contact with the business owners throughout the town through various venues.

This year MSG created a Community Economic Development Advisory Committee that involves local business owners and borough representatives. From the first meeting, this group identified parking, zoning and safe streets as top priorities. These issues have been added to the 10-year economic revitalization plan and are in sync with the priorities of borough projects.

The Steinwehr Business Improvement District is an outstanding example of the local community becoming and staying engaged. Just take a walk or drive down Steinwehr Avenue and see the construction underway as a result of this community's investment of time and money. Beautiful upgrades of sidewalks, lighting, flowers, benches and marketing endeavors have drawn new businesses and jobs to the community. Since 2009 there have been 24 new businesses in the Steinwehr area and millions of dollars invested. Commercial property values go up and annual revenues increase for the borough, a win-win situation.

Fundraising and marketing events, such as Baltimore Street's Steppin' Out in Lincoln's Footsteps in May, the Baltimore Street's Mural project that raises money to paint heritage murals down Baltimore Street, and Steinwehr's Victorian Christmas, are additional examples of the community stepping up and becoming involved in keeping our community alive and well.

The Baltimore Street Community is currently focused on raising funds to extend the revitalization improvements made on Steinwehr down Baltimore Street to connect to Lincoln Square. The fundraising committee is planning a fun event for the community that will be a "Polish Pottery Bingo" night. The community is invited to this fun event on Saturday, Sept. 24, at 5:30 p.m. at the Gettysburg Fire Hall. A \$15 ticket will include 3 bingo cards for 20 games and some special raffles. Please mark your calendars for Sept. 24, for a fun evening with your neighbors and friends and support your community. To purchase tickets, please call Tim Woodward, 479-1083 or info@gettysburgpolishpottery.com.

MSG encourages everyone to get involved. For more information, call Main Street Gettysburg, 337-3491 or email info@mainstreetgettysburg.org.

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