

High School Survey Results

A survey was developed to involve high school aged youth in the planning process. Eighty-one responses were received (from about 220 students from New Lebanon). They were asked to identify the features of New Lebanon that were positive and negative, and were also asked to offer ideas on how to improve the negative characteristics and maintain the positive ones. Additionally, students were asked to imagine what New Lebanon would be like if it was an award-winning town in the year 2012. Students were also asked to identify special places and places of concern. Overall, the majority of students who participated in this survey were very oriented towards recreational activities, shopping, and the area's restaurants. The following is a summary of these results:

Negative Features

Overall, most of the characteristics that were given as negative fell in three categories of features: lack of places to recreate; lack of activities; and shopping. Lack of places to find a recreational activity was the most important negative feature identified by the students. Some of the specific responses in this category included lack of a community center, not enough parks, no movie theater, no gym or other athletic facilities, and no pool hall or video game arcade. Negative features related to shopping included lack of pharmacy, no bookstore or clothing store, and lack of restaurants. Some students mentioned that the issue was that New Lebanon is too far from existing shopping centers. Some students felt the school was a negative feature especially related to school food, teachers and principals lack of computers, and school rules. There were a variety of other negative features identified including lack of jobs, cows and the smell of cows, lack of a good transportation system, no cell towers, and too few people.

When asked how to improve these negatives, most of the responses were to provide for those features that were missing. For example, the solution to the lack of a community center was to build a community center.

Positive Features

Positive features included restaurants, the park, New Lebanon's small town atmosphere, its quiet nature, the speedway, school, basketball courts, stores, and the video store. Other positive characteristics included swimming holes and the springs, nice people, the safety of the area, a clean environment, and the thought that New Lebanon is a close-knit community.

Some of their ideas to further improve these positives included provision of more stores, provide for more recreational facilities, and to encourage a variety of more stores. There were also some ideas generated related to the broader character of New Lebanon, and some students offered ideas such as to renovate the pavilion, make existing buildings look better, provide for a building for town history, keep a strong police presence, and provide more parking at the library.

Award-Winning Features

An award-winning future New Lebanon has an abundance of recreational activities. When asked what the award-winning town would be like in the future, the most common response was that it had a diversity of recreational places and activities. Also at the top of the list included better stores, maintenance of a small town character, more restaurants and places to eat, a clean environment, welcoming and nice people, traffic lights, a good school, sports teams, public transportation, low crime, no farm smells, scenic views, and more jobs, among others.

Places of Concern

Not many responses were in this category, but some students mentioned concern about the IGA, cow pastures, pollution from fertilizers, rebuilding of the EZ Mart, and Stewarts gas pumps.

Special Places

The top four responses (by at 6 students) included the basketball and baseball courts, Indian Spring Fountain, Shatford Park, and their house or friends' houses. Others included farms, views from West Street and Old Post Road, Lebanon Springs, restaurants, and the school. Mountains, scenic views, forests, creeks, lakes, ponds, and other environmental features were mentioned by individual students as being special.