

**Borough of West Reading  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

**October 15, 2020**

**Committee Members Present**

Philip Wert, Nicholas Imbesi, Andrew Kearney, Aaron Gantz, Mark Ratcliffe, Cathy Hoffman, and John Woodward.

**Visitors Present**

None

**Call to Order**

Mr. Wert called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m.

**Public Comment**

None

**Approval of the Minutes**

Motion made to approve the Economic Development Committee minutes of September 14, 2020 moved by Andrew Kearney and seconded by John Woodward. **Motion carried 6-0.**

**Residential Properties Update**

Mr. Wert provided an update concerning the Villas at Narrow. All the current homes being constructed have already sold. At this time, the next set of homes are to begin construction by spring of 2021. It was noted that residential homes are moving very quickly in the Borough. The codes office has seen 12 transfer inspections in the last week. It was also discussed that a developer will be building two new units at the corner of Olive and Walnut Streets.

**Significant/Vacant West Reading Commercial Properties Update**

- 301 Penn Avenue – The property owner hired a contractor to make a vanilla envelope inside – this work has now been completed. Still no new tenant.
- 408 Penn Avenue – Snazy Beauty Supply is opening up in this location.
- 416 Penn Avenue – Motor club opening by the first of the year.
- 428 Penn Avenue – Construction has now been delayed until 2021. A sign has been erected advertising the available space.
- 433 Penn Avenue – Nothing new to report at this time.
- 445, 447 and 449 Penn Avenue – Nothing new to report at this time.
- 450 Penn Avenue – Subway franchise and building have sold. Nothing new to report at this time.
- 501 Penn Avenue – Court case is still pending for game of skill machines. Owner is going through the process of getting a liquor license for this site.
- 530 Penn Avenue – Rebel Hive Meadery is now open and has expanded their hours.
- 614 Penn Avenue – New Greek restaurant called Mazi is now open.
- 633 Penn Avenue – Looking for a new tenant.
- 635 Penn Avenue – East Ridge Outfitters is going out of business and is looking for a new tenant.
- 641 Penn Avenue – Empire Home Store is now open.
- 643 Penn Avenue – Willow Creek Brewing is opening this fall and is working on an investment model.
- 707 Penn Avenue – Nothing new to report. Residential property to watch.

- 728 Penn Avenue – Finch + Fern home furnishing store is opening on 10/16/2020.
- 22 N Sixth Avenue – CT tours has closed; this space is available.
- 36 N. Sixth Avenue – El Morro Café has closed and B-Green Deli is opening soon.

### **Strategic Planning Discussion/Wyomissing Update**

Mr. Woodward shared that the Berkshire Mall has been bought by a new owner. Wyomissing Borough met with the new owner to discuss their plans for the property. They are going to try to obtain two new anchor tenants to revitalize the mall.

Mr. Woodward noted that the 4<sup>th</sup> street project has started and that Wyomissing Borough is worried about Equus leaving. He also mentioned that Wyomissing Borough is trying to get a grant to redo the Borough garage.

Mr. Wert noted that the medical school is moving along quite well, and that the outer shell is almost complete.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicholas Imbesi  
Borough Manager