

# **BOROUGH OF WEST READING PLANNING COMMISSION**

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2017**

The West Reading Planning Commission met for their regular meeting on Wednesday, September 6, 2017 at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chair Philip Wert, Vice Chair Christopher Lincoln, Jennifer Bressler, Oswald Herbert, Nicholas Imbesi, Christin Kelley, Engineer Tom Unger, Cathy Hoffman, Borough Manager, and Cynthia Madeira, Assistant to the Manager. Terry Siggins was unable to attend.

**Visitors:**      Amber Rambo                  Resident

Mr. Wert called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

There was no public comment.

## **Approval of the Minutes**

Motion to approve the July 5, 2017 minutes. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mrs. Bressler.

**Motion carried 5-0.**

## **New Business**

**501 Penn Avenue Proposed Expansion** – Systems Design Engineering reviewed the Zoning Hearing Board Appeal for the existing gas station/retail store known as Sunoco, a copy of comments is attached. The applicant is requesting relief to the following:

- Variance from side and rear yard requirements.
- Variance to permit expansion not in compliance with dimensional standards of the Central Business District (yard requirements).
- Expansion of non-conforming building by Special Exception.
- Expansion of building/floor area by up to 25% by Special Exception.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the proposed 20' x 60' addition and the encroachment to yard setback lines surrounding the property creating further concern for public health, safety and welfare. The increased difficulty in navigating the already congested area caused committee members to agree to oppose the relief requests as noted above.

Motion to recommend Borough Council oppose the Zoning Appeal based upon the review letter from Systems Design Engineering. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Ms. Kelley. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Mr. Herbert arrived at 7:50 p.m.

## **Old Business**

- a. **Joint Comprehensive Plan Update** – Tabled until next month.
- b. **Zoning Changes:**
  - i. **Traffic Circle District Revisions** – Systems Design Engineering provided the following suggestions to revise zoning for the parcels surrounding the circle to allow uses that more aptly fits their current and future uses:
    - Expand current Institutional District to include 415 and 416 Reading Avenue properties.

- Expand uses permitted by Special Exception in the Institutional District to also permit professional offices and low-rise apartments.
- ii. **Signage** – Tabled until next month.
- iii. **Zoning District** – The Residential Professional (RP) Zoning District classification for The Villa's Development and portions of the 100 and 300 blocks of Tulpehocken Avenue were discussed. The Committee agreed to rezone these areas as a medium density residential use, R2.
- iv. **Central Business District Revision** – Conditional use currently allows parking lots in this district. The committee agreed to revise commercial and non-commercial parking lots in this district as a use by special exception. Mr. Herbert also suggested revising this district to allow 100% impervious coverage for the creation of additional off-street parking since a number of parcels in this district are currently at 100% coverage. Mr. Wert stated the MS4 permit as well as the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance would not allow the added strain to stormwater runoff.
- c. **Code Review** – Tabled to next month.
- d. **Wireless Communication Facility** – EBI Consulting requested, pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the Borough's comments to the proposed construction along South Seventh Avenue of a 37' wood pole tower supporting wireless telecommunications antennas and the effects on historic properties. The Committee agreed due to the absence of historic properties in the area that no comment was necessary.

## Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Madeira  
Assistant to the Manager