

BOROUGH OF WEST READING PLANNING COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2017

The West Reading Planning Commission met for their regular meeting on Wednesday, November 1, 2017 at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chair Philip Wert, Vice Chair Christopher Lincoln, Terry Siggins, Oswald Herbert, Nicholas Imbesi, Christin Kelley, Jennifer Bressler, Engineer Tom Unger, Borough Manager Cathy Hoffman and Assistant to the Manager Cynthia Madeira.

Visitors: Amber Rambo Resident
 Andrew Kearney 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 October 4, 2017 minutes. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Lincoln.

Motion carried 7-0.

New Business

- a. **Berks County Housing Survey** - The Berks County Redevelopment Authority requested completion of a Fair Housing Assessment Survey as required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Mrs. Hoffman will complete the survey and submit by the due date of November 30, 2017.

Old Business

- a. **Joint Comprehensive Plan Update** – Mrs. Bressler reported the October meeting topic included discussions on energy conservation via modes of transportation, pattern of land use, solar access, shading, etc. The agenda for the November meeting pertains to the proposed bypass construction with a PennDOT representative in attendance.
- b. **Zoning Changes:**
 - i. **Section 532 Signs Permitted in the Institutional District** – Existing Institutional District signage data was provided to the committee for review. All of the pre-existing signage exceeds the eight square feet allowance. The committee agreed to increase the square footage allowance to thirty-two.
 - ii. **Online Home Sharing** – Mr. Unger was unable to locate existing shared housing regulations and recommended the committee outline regulations pertaining to short-term lodging or home sharing.
 - iii. **Number of Uses per Parcel** – Mr. Unger provided information for the committee's consideration to control the number of uses per parcel in order to promote multiple uses in a safe manner. Following lengthy discussions Mr. Unger will draft wording for further consideration.
 - iv. **Central Business District Aesthetic Signage** – Mr. Unger provided information pertaining to other local architectural design standards and Ms. Kelley suggested review of the City of Lancaster's sign ordinance. This information will be reviewed and preferences noted during next month's meeting. Mr. Wert also stated the design standard should be included within the Community Development Objectives Section of the Preliminary Provisions.

- v. **Non-Conforming Setback** – Per Systems Design Engineering suggestion the committee agreed to add language to regulate a non-conforming building due to yard encroachment to allow enlargement provided there would not be an increase to the existing encroachment.
- vi. **Going Out of Business Sales** – The state licensing and regulation of “Fire Sales” was discussed. In order to avoid misleading the public and potentially causing harm to the public interest an ordinance will be drafted for further review.

Mr. Imbesi departed the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

- c. **Property Maintenance Board of Appeals** – The committee discussed in length the need to appoint and maintain a board of appeals versus appealing a violation to a Magisterial District Judge. The duty of an appeals board is to determine whether or not the code enforcement officer misinterpreted or misapplied the code. The intent of an appeal board is to give the property owner an avenue to appeal prior to a citation being filed with a District Judge. The appeals board would also hear appeals pertaining to current Borough Ordinances of Alarm Device, Rental Property, Sidewalk Café and Transient Retail Business as well as potential new ordinances such as Quality of Life and Disruptive Conduct.
- d. **Codes Review** – Tabled until next month.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Herbert and seconded by Mrs. Bressler.
Motion carried 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Madeira
Assistant to the Manager