

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING
PLANNING COMMISSION**

WEDNESDAY, MAY 2, 2018

The West Reading Planning Commission met for their regular meeting on Wednesday, May 2, 2018 at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chair Philip Wert, Vice Chair Christopher Lincoln, Oswald Herbert, Nicholas Imbesi, Christin Kelley, Jennifer Bressler, Borough Manager Cathy Hoffman and Assistant to the Manager Cynthia Madeira. Terry Siggins was unable to attend the meeting.

Visitors: David Major, Reading Hospital
Donald Haas, Bogia Engineering

Mr. Wert called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Herbert requested revision of the section regarding vehicles per his written request to provide further clarification. Commission members reviewed his written request and the majority determined the minutes as presented were an accurate summarization.

Motion to approve the April 4, 2018 minutes as written. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **In favor of the motion** – Mrs. Bressler, Ms. Kelley, Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Imbesi and Mr. Wert.

Against the motion – Mr. Herbert. **Motion carried 5-1.**

New Business

- a. **Tower Health Land Development** – David Major requested relief from land development requirements to install a temporary pre-fabricated structure to house MRI units during a seven-phase plan to redevelop their radiology department. The structure would remain within the existing hospital ground footprint. Seven parking spaces would be removed adjacent to an existing structure, concrete poured and structure connected to an existing electric and water supply. Mr. Major anticipates a maximum time span of three years for the temporary structure. Once the structure is no longer needed it would be removed and parking spaces restored.

Mr. Wert requested a Memorandum of Understanding to ensure removal of the structure within a specified time period. Mr. Major will request the hospital legal department draft a memorandum.

Mr. Wert noted engineer review and comment would be required prior to granting a waiver.

A motion was made to entertain waiving land development requirements contingent upon engineer comments and obtaining a Memorandum of Understanding. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- b. **Burial of Animals** – Further information was provided to Commission members to review and discuss during the next meeting.
- c. **Tower Health Wayfinding Signage** – Mrs. Hoffman noted excavation within right-of-way areas opposite to hospital grounds for directional signage, which the Borough was unaware of. Following a review of the nine additional directional sign placement areas Mrs. Hoffman

suggested allowing placement of three signs: 1) East side of Museum Road in the vicinity of the pool; 2) Parkside Drive North heading east at Seventh Avenue; 3) Parkside Drive North heading east at the Emergency Room entrance. The remaining six locations are near signage that was previously approved upon hospital grounds, and therefore unnecessary in her opinion.

Motion to approve installation of three directional signs within the Borough Right-of-Way as noted. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Old Business

a. **Zoning Hearing Board Appeal:**

Nickel Properties has submitted an appeal application to the Zoning Hearing Board to request relief from side yard setbacks to construct a building at 428 Penn Avenue. Mr. Herbert recommended submitting a letter of support to the Zoning Hearing Board.

Motion to submit a letter of support to the Zoning Hearing Board regarding relief of side yard setbacks. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Herbert. **Motion carried 6-0.**

b. **Zoning Changes:**

i. **Review proposed amendments** – Mrs. Hoffman requested revisions to the sign ordinance to allow the Reading Hospital to install signage at the Vanity Fair complex given that existing regulations would not allow additional signage now that the Vanity Fair sign variance was approved by the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Imbesi suggested creating a building class to allow additional sign square footage for larger structures. However, in an effort to expedite revisions with the current proposed amendments, Mrs. Hoffman will request assistance from the planning department at Systems Design Engineering for feedback to create minimal modifications within certain districts.

Mr. Wert suggested the following minor revisions to prohibit tax-exempt uses within the Central Business District:

- Remove the word “religious” from “Membership Club” definition.
- Remove the word “formal” pertaining to religious services and add the word “prayer groups” to the definition of “Place of Worship”.
- Remove “Places of worship and related residential uses” as a use permitted by special exception in the Central Business District.

c. **Codes Review** – Tabled until next month.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Herbert and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Assistant to the Manager

Cathy Hoffman
Borough Manager