

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING
PLANNING COMMISSION**

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2019

The West Reading Planning Commission met for their regular meeting on Wednesday, December 4, 2019 at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chair Philip Wert; Vice Chair Christopher Lincoln; Jennifer Bressler, Oswald Herbert, Christin Kelley (arrived at 6:15 p.m.), Tracy Fiedler; Engineer Tom Unger; Borough Manager Nicholas Imbesi; Code Department Manager Cathy Hoffman and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira.

Visitors: Mariella Napoli, Resident
Kevin Kozo, Property Owner

Mr. Wert called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the November 6, 2019 minutes. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mrs. Bressler.

Motion carried 6-0.

New Business

- a. **428 Penn Avenue Redevelopment Project** – Mr. Wert noted receipt of Berks County Planning Commission comments and Systems Design Engineering's Preliminary Plan Review #1 letter that pertains to proposed land development of the parcel known as 428 Penn Avenue. Mr. Unger provided an overview of their review and findings:
- The property is located within the Central Business District with a proposed first floor restaurant use and residential apartment units on the 2nd and 3rd floors.
 - The Zoning Hearing Board granted a variance on November 26, 2018 with regards to the front and side yard setbacks.
 - It was recommended to create a pervious surface or grass area within the proposed no-parking space located at the rear of the property near Cherry Street to maintain the maximum allowed lot coverage of 75%. Mr. Unger stated that this minor revision to the plans would eliminate a few of the remaining stormwater management issues with regards to: groundwater recharge; water quality requirements; streambank erosion requirements, and stormwater quantity control exemptions.
 - A lighting plan is needed for the off-street parking facilities.
 - Parking design requirements for lots with more than fifteen spaces must provide landscaping, however the parking lot is not being altered except for the elimination of one parking space, and is considered an existing condition.
 - A permit would be required to operate a sidewalk café at the discretion of the Code Enforcement Officer.
 - Items in need of clarification or that were missing from the preliminary plans include:
 - Contour lines and grading information;
 - Stormwater Management Plan;
 - Information regarding cross-access easements or agreements with neighboring properties;
 - Copy of the deed for the subject tract;
 - Public water/sewer availability and compliance with the Borough's Act 537 Plan;
 - Proposed improvements in accordance with the architectural plans;
 - Individual parcels should be designated on the plan.

- A letter of intent and approved water services agreement is required for preliminary plan approval.
- Street trees are required between 30 to 50 feet apart per landscape and buffering requirements. It was suggested to allow the Shade Tree Commission to provide a recommendation to Council.
- Recreation and Open Space requirements are an existing non-conformity that is not proposed to change.
- A Traffic Impact Study (TIS) would be required unless the applicant can substantiate that fewer than 300 trips per day are anticipated with the proposed land development.
- An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) should be submitted or a waiver requested from this requirement. Mr. Unger stated that there is no virgin ground or negative impact proposed with this land development project.
- A copy of the PennDOT Highway Occupancy Permits (HOP) for curb replacement and storm sewer reconstruction would need to be submitted to the Borough prior to obtaining final plan approval.
- An Erosion and Sediment Control Plan should be submitted to the Berks County Conservation District and a copy of the approval letter submitted to the Borough prior to final plan approval.
- A performance guarantee should be provided for the stormwater management controls prior to final plan approval.
- Plan clarifications are needed with regards to: the proposed roof drainage system to ensure discharge does not cross over sidewalk areas; grading information to show how the reconstructed sidewalk and ramp would prevent ponding as well as compliance with ADA ramp requirements; and details for abandonment of the existing storm sewer under the proposed building.

Commissioners reviewed the Berks County Planning Commission comments and noted the following:

- The Joint Municipal Authority and Western Berks Water Authority should be contacted and offered an opportunity to review the plans relative to sewer and water supply needs.
- The Fire Marshal should also be offered an opportunity to review the plans relative to fire protection/emergency issues.
- Information is needed regarding the placement of solid waste container(s) for collection from Cherry Street.

Mr. Kozo indicated that two parking spaces per residential unit would be reserved for the residential apartment unit's use; nine parking lot spaces will be available for the restaurant/business use and two additional parking spaces will be available along Penn Avenue following removal of the curb cut. Mr. Kozo confirmed that no water amenities are planned for the rooftop deck area.

The PennDOT 2020 Penn Avenue repaving project was discussed and it was recommended that Mr. Unger review and potentially modify the Penn Avenue parking stall line placement plan that has been submitted to PennDOT. Scheduling of the 428 Penn Avenue land development project in relation to the PennDOT repaving project were discussed, Mr. Kozo indicated a preferred construction start date of March 30, 2020 and that the first task would be to establish water/sewer connections and curb replacement which should be completed prior to the repaving project.

Due to the limited number of land development plan items that need to be addressed, it was recommended that Mr. Kozo submit a Preliminary/Final Plan for review.

Mr. Kozo and Mr. Unger departed the meeting at 6:42 p.m.

- b. **Rental Ordinance Fee Schedule** – Mrs. Hoffman shared a recent objection that pertained to the redundancy of requiring a certificate of occupancy inspection prior to transferring ownership of a rental property and the subsequently required rental occupancy inspection.

It was recommended to delineate the additional items inspected during a rental inspection and to create a fee schedule modification that would compensate the cost to inspect these additional items during the certificate of occupancy inspection as opposed to assessing the full amount for both certificate of occupancy and rental occupancy inspection fees.

- c. **Wireless Communication Master License Agreement** – Mrs. Hoffman requested feedback on Cingular Wireless' various section modifications of the master license agreement. The following items were discussed:

- The inclusion of an annual rate of \$600 for the landline backhaul equipment.
- The removal of requiring complete design modification submissions prior to processing of the agreement. Commissioners recommended retaining this requirement.
- The inclusion of "Pre-Approved Communication Facility Installations" that would allow installation without further land use reviews/approvals. Commissioners recommended removal of this inclusion.
- Coordination of maintenance and equipment upgrade activities were reviewed and discussed in relation to the installation of wireless communication facilities on traffic light poles and it was decided that this type of installation was not desirable due to potential tampering/interference with emergency management and security camera systems that are currently installed within these poles.
- New pole ownership was discussed and decided that the licensee would remain responsible for maintenance of the pole until such time that the licensee would remove their wireless communication facility from the pole.
- The revision to response time to remediate signal interference with the Borough's Communication Infrastructure was discussed and it was decided to retain the twenty-four hour timeframe as opposed to the requested seventy-two hour timeframe.
- The inclusion of a Licensor Interference with Licensee Communication Facility clause was discussed and found to be acceptable, however a solicitor review of all changes was recommended.
- Electric service responsibility was discussed and Commissioners agreed that the Borough would not accept responsibility for providing electricity or transport connectivity, nor accept a flat utility usage fee of \$50 per month.
- The solicitor will review the requested revision to insurance requirements.

- d. **Folino Subdivision** – Mr. Imbesi stated that the solicitor has been provided with information pertaining to the eight townhomes along Second Avenue that exist on one parcel of land and has not yet provided guidance as to how to pursue completion of this subdivision.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 p.m. by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Madeira
Borough Secretary