

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING
PLANNING COMMISSION**

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2020

The West Reading Planning Commission met for their regular meeting on Wednesday, January 8, 2020 at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chair Philip Wert; Jennifer Bressler, Terry Siggins, Tracy Fiedler, Mariella Napoli (arrived at 6:29 p.m.); Engineer Tom Unger (departed the meeting at 6:28 p.m.); Planner Philip Ashear; Borough Manager Nicholas Imbesi; Code Department Manager Cathy Hoffman and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira.

Visitors: None

Mr. Wert called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the December 4, 2019 minutes. **Moved** by Mr. Siggins and seconded by Mrs. Bressler.

Motion carried 5-0.

New Business

- a. **644 Penn Avenue Sign Variance Request** – Mr. Wert noted receipt of St. James Church Appeal to the Zoning Hearing Board requesting relief from Section 455-172 M. to permit a permanent in-ground freestanding sign that would have an overall dimension of 6' 4" high by 6' wide. It was noted that there are currently two freestanding signs on the property fronting Penn Avenue; the proposed sign would replace the two existing signs.

Mr. Ashear stated that an additional variance would be needed for sign size. The proposed sign consists of two display faces and one logo. Each display face is 2' by 5' in size. One display face is internally illuminated with printed graphics that reads "Reading City Church – West Reading". The second display face is an electronic LED message board. The logo is 20" round and sits atop of the sign. Commissioners expressed concern regarding compliance with electronic sign regulations, which prohibit flashing, blinking, scrolling or moving lights on the proposed 2' by 5' LED display board. A brief discussion was held suggesting that the electronic sign provisions be removed from the Zoning Ordinance to maintain the historic type area of the Central Business District.

A plot plan is needed to accurately depict the proposed sign location and a building permit would be required. Mrs. Hoffman will request additional information from the applicant as to the location of the sign and candle strength for the upper portion of the sign to present to Council prior to the hearing scheduled on January 23, 2020.

Motion to recommend Council to become a part of the Zoning Hearing with Borough Solicitor attendance to express acceptance of the freestanding sign as presented and denial of the LED display board. **Moved** by Mrs. Bressler and seconded by Ms. Fiedler. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- b. **Rental Ordinance Amendment** – Review comments have been received from the Solicitor, however due to the recent Pottstown court case questioning the handling of rental inspections it was decided to table review of these comments at this time.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Borough Secretary