

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING  
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2014**

The West Reading Planning Commission met for their regular meeting on Wednesday, October 1, 2014 at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chair Philip Wert, Vice Chair Christopher Lincoln, Maxine Goodwin, Christin Kelley, Terry Siggins, and Kim Collins. Deborah Hutcheson was unable to attend. Environmental Advisory Council member Amber Rambo was also in attendance for the discussion concerning the animal regulation review.

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

**ANIMAL ORDINANCE REVISION**

Mr. Wert spoke briefly about the ordinance review, and noted that the Environmental Advisory Council will be assisting with this project. Ms. Rambo, an EAC member spoke about the need to amend the Animal Ordinance to reflect the changes that are happening across the nation. She noted that cities are being proactive about issues such as bee keeping and laying hens being permitted in urban areas and that it is in the best interest of the Borough to have something in place before it becomes an issue.

Much discussion ensued about the best way to approach the project and it was decided that Commission members should research the topic and send any pertinent information to Mrs. Hoffman, who will compile the information.

**SMART GROWTH AMERICA**

Mr. Wert said that technical assistance grants are available to communities for a variety of initiatives such as:

- Transit oriented development
- Local strategies to slow climate change
- Transportation performance measurement
- Zoning codes for small cities
- Regional planning for small communities
- Walkability workshop/audit
- Using LEED-ND to accelerate development of sustainable communities
- Complete streets workshops
- Sustainable land use code audit
- Planning for economic and fiscal health
- Implementing Smart Growth 101

After some discussion it was decided that the Walkability and Complete Street Workshops would be of most interest therefore Mr. Wert will complete the grant applications. If the Borough is successful, the workshop(s) will be provided to those interested in learning about the topic.

## **GENERAL CODES – CODIFICATION**

Mr. Wert explained that “General Code” is working on a digitized codification of all Borough ordinances and has recommended that all ordinances be reviewed for their relevance and update where necessary. Council has asked that the Planning Commission take on this review, therefore the first three chapters were distributed to Commission members:

1. Administration and Government
2. Animals
3. Bicycles

It was noted that Chris Lincoln had contacted Chief Powell concerning the bicycle chapter and he indicated that there were many changes necessary concerning conflicts with state law, redundancy, outdated information etc. The Chief will be asked to meet with Mrs. Hoffman concerning the necessary changes.

The Administration and Government chapter was discussed to the end of Section 305 and the first necessary change is to update the language so it becomes gender neutral, as has been done in the newest version of the Borough Code. Other recommended changes are as follows:

- Part 1 **Elected Officers** needs to be updated and perhaps made more generic as far as the compensation language is concerned.
- Part 2 **Borough Manager** needs to be reviewed by staff to ensure that the duties, powers and responsibilities are consistent with current practices, such as bonding, purchasing, Zoning Officer, Building Inspector, etc.
- Part 3 **Code Enforcement** will need to be reviewed by their department to ensure that the section is consistent with current practices, such as:
  - Section 302 Office Records – must conform with Right to Know regulations
  - Section 304 Duties and Powers – ‘Right of Entry’, ‘Access Entry Refused’ and ‘Rule Making Authority’ may need to be updated
  - Section 305 Applications for Permit – Chapter 4 of the Code of Ordinances deals with Buildings and Structures and it was suggested that Section 305 could simply refer to Chapter 4 instead of listing of the information in the section. 305(c) needs to state that fees are now tripled. With 305(k) it was asked if the application is deemed approved if it is not officially approved or rejected within 30 days.

The review of Chapter 1 will be continued at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Hoffman  
Administrative Assistant