

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING
PLANNING COMMISSION**

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2018

The West Reading Planning Commission met for their regular meeting on Wednesday, November 7, 2018 at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chair Philip Wert; Vice Chair Christopher Lincoln; Nicholas Imbesi, Christin Kelley, Terry Siggins, Daniel Horman, Joseph Scoboria, Oswald Herbert, Engineer Tom Unger, Borough Manager Cathy Hoffman and Assistant to the Manager Cynthia Madeira.

Visitors: Kevin Flannery, Equus Capital Partners
George Haines, Equus Capital Partners
John Woodward, Business Owner
Robin Horman, Business Owner
Claire Edwards, Business Owner
Mike Burkey, Burkey Corporation
Marco Folino, Business Owner

Mr. Wert called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the October 3, 2018 minutes. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 8-0.**

New Business

- a. **Barley Mow Expansion** – Ms. Edwards spoke of plans to expand and renovate their existing business onto the neighboring property, known as 717 Penn Avenue to create an additional kitchen area with the removal of a section of the dividing wall shared with 719 Penn Avenue. A paver patio is planned in the front of 717 Penn Avenue with an expansion of the beer garden in the rear of the property. Mr. Burkey, the contractor who will be in charge of the construction requested waiver of land development requirements to add an 8' by 17' area in the rear of the buildings within an existing paved area to enclose stairwells for deliveries as depicted in the plans that were submitted to the Code Department. Installation of kitchen equipment is planned on the roof of the kitchen.

Mr. Unger requested calculations of pervious versus impervious coverage's for the two parcels to satisfy zoning requirements and recommended combining the two parcels onto one deed to allow the shared use between parcels.

Legal requirements for deed consolidation will be requested from the Solicitor and information provided to both Borough Council and Ms. Edwards prior to the November 20, 2018 Council meeting.

Motion to recommend Council to approve waiver of land development requirements for the Barley Mow expansion. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 8-0.**

- b. **Vision Mechanical Conditional Use** – Mr. Unger provided review comments pertaining to the Conditional Use application to establish a wine wholesale warehouse business to be located at 135 Juniata Street. The property is located within the Light Industrial District and the proposed business would occupy approximately 4,896 square feet with no new exterior development planned. A previous grant for conditional use was awarded in 2009 to allow a wholesale distributor of radiators to occupy a portion of the existing building. The applicant's request appears to be compliant with the general criteria for conditional uses and similar in size and impact to the previously approved wholesale business. There seems to be adequate parking to accommodate the proposed activities and suggested granting approval subject to compliance with all other applicable local and state requirements that would not conflict with the health, safety and welfare of the Borough residents.

Motion to recommend Council to approve the Conditional Use request, scheduled on November 20, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. for a wine wholesale warehouse business to be located at 135 Juniata Street.

Moved by Ms. Kelley and seconded by Mr. Siggins. **Motion carried 8-0.**

- c. **Building 202 Parking** – Mr. Flannery requested permission to restripe the parking lot located at 739 Reading Avenue to align entry and divide the Tower Health and Vanity Fair parking areas. Restriping plans would add one additional parking space with a total of 306 Tower Health spaces, 222 Vanity Fair spaces, and 13 handicapped spaces, which brings the total number of parking spaces to 541.

Mr. Unger stated the proposed restriping would improve the existing conditions and allow safer travel for vehicles and pedestrians and that no permits would be required. Commissioners agreed.

- d. **Zoning Ordinance Amendment** – Commissioners briefly discussed zoning ordinance revisions that are needed for the Light Industrial District to allow a wholesale business as a use permitted by right. Mr. Unger recommended limiting the allowed space for wholesale use to less than 25,000 square feet. Due to advertisement of the previously discussed revisions to the zoning ordinance and a hearing scheduled on November 20, 2018 it was decided to hold these revisions for a future amendment.

Commissioners reviewed the recent revisions to the zoning ordinance per discussions last month regarding the Berks County Planning Commission comments. The definition of quasi-public or semipublic use was discussed to regulate and allow places of worship within zoning districts other than Central or General Business Districts.

Motion to recommend Council to approve the Zoning Ordinance amendments. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Ms. Kelley. **Motion carried 8-0.**

- e. **Chen Vegetarian House** – Mr. Unger provided plans that were submitted to remove the stairway and ramp at 709 Penn Avenue to install porous patio pavers to create an outdoor seating area. The proposed project would remove all existing green space to the front of this property. Mr. Unger recommended revisions to the zoning ordinance to limit the lot coverage area in order to retain green spaces in the future.

Old Business

- a. **Historic Architectural Review Board** – Ms. Kelley shared information she obtained from the PA Downtown Center to determine the Borough's eligibility and guidelines to potentially establish a historic district. Suggestions received included completion of a worksheet, enactment of a historic district overlay and participation in the Certified Local Government program. Commissioners discussed the desired path to achieve this goal and decided an ad hoc subcommittee should be created to discuss these options. Ms. Kelley, Mr. Wert and the Main Street Manager will begin to work with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.
- b. **Solicitation Ordinance Update** – Tabled until next month.
- c. **Codes Review** – Tabled until next month.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Assistant to the Manager