

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING
PLANNING COMMISSION**

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2019

The West Reading Planning Commission met for their regular meeting on Wednesday, February 6, 2019 at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chair Philip Wert; Vice Chair Christopher Lincoln; Nicholas Imbesi, Christin Kelley, Daniel Horman, Joseph Scoboria, Oswald Herbert, Jennifer Bressler; Borough Manager Cathy Hoffman and Assistant to the Manager Cynthia Madeira.

Visitors: Reading Eagle Reporter

Mr. Wert called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the January 2, 2019 minutes. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Herbert.

Motion carried 8-0.

New Business

- a. **Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB) Meeting Update** – Mr. Wert and Ms. Kelley shared the following highlights of their meeting with a representative of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) and the Pennsylvania Downtown Center (PDC):
- There are flexibilities in creating and enacting regulations to suit the Borough’s needs. Stopgap measures to avoid demolition of certain properties or to maintain a relationship of buildings can be added to the regulations as desired.
 - Funding options were discussed such as achieving designation of a Certified Local Government (CLG) to utilize various tools for funding. Documentation that was discussed during the meeting will be shared with Commission members.
 - HARB regulations can loosen zoning restrictions for added flexibility to maintain historic buildings.
 - PHMC and PDC will meet again with the ad hoc subcommittee to provide step-by-step assistance through the process. The next meeting is scheduled on February 20, 2019 at 4:00 p.m.
 - The first step would be to establish an inventory of properties to be included in this program by a survey professional. A potential starting point of the survey would include Penn Avenue properties.
 - Associated costs to implement a HARB program should be available within six months.
 - Anticipated time frame to enact a HARB program is one to two years.
 - A review of staffing would be necessary to administer the program, which could be a cooperative effort with neighboring municipalities.
 - State review and approval is needed to establish a HARB Commission.
- b. **Solicitation Ordinance** – A review of the final draft and fee schedule were discussed. The door-to-door solicitation fees were decided to remain unchanged with the exception of removing the up to a year fee to require solicitation applicants to update the Borough on their activities. Commission members agreed to an annual mobile vendor fee of \$300.

A motion to recommend adoption of the Peddling, Soliciting and Transient Retail Sales Ordinance and fee schedule revisions was made by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 8-0.**

- c. **Zoning Discussion** – Mr. Wert reminded Commission members of the intent to follow up on additional Zoning Ordinance revisions such as district map changes and Light Industrial District warehousing regulations and suggested members review their notes for discussion during the March meeting.

- d. **Rental Ordinance** – Commission members began review of revisions to the Rental Property Ordinance, specifically the definitions section. The following items were discussed:
- The definition of “Family” should be added and could be copied from the Zoning Ordinance Definitions.
 - The definition of “Guest” needs review by the Police Chief or Solicitor to determine the “implied consent of an occupant”.
 - The definition of “Landlord” and “Owner” are the same and should differ to reflect their individual responsibilities.
 - The definition of “Lease” and “Rental Agreement” are the same and it was decided to remove “Lease” and add the term “lease” to the “Rental Agreement” definition.
 - The definition of “Permit” was listed twice. It was decided to retain the more detailed definition.
 - The definition of “Property Maintenance Code” is a partial duplication of International Property Maintenance Code listed under the definition of “Codes”. It was decided to remove the definition of “Property Maintenance Code” and reference Chapter 341 in the definition of “Codes”.
 - The definition of “Residential Rental Unit” was discussed in length and decided to rework this definition to remove confusion of rooming unit versus rooming house.
 - The full name of the Borough should be included in the definition of “Police”.
 - It was decided to revise the definition of “Rooming House” to “Rooming Unit”.

It was recommended to ensure the Rental Ordinance matches regulations within the Zoning Ordinance and review of pages 3-5 of the Rental Ordinance should be completed and discussed next month.

Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Ms. Kelley. **Motion carried 8-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Assistant to the Manager