

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING
PLANNING COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 3, 2021**

The West Reading Planning Commission met for their regular meeting on Wednesday, November 3, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chair Philip Wert; Vice Chair Christopher Lincoln; Members Jennifer Bressler, Daniel Horman, Cody Rhoads and Kacie Rodriguez; Zoning Officer Cathy Hoffman.

Visitors Tom Unger, Borough Engineer
 Mike Rohrer, SDE Planner
 Reporter

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

Mr. Wert indicated that there was no formal agenda for the meeting however there is an ongoing list of items that will be tackled at the December meeting. He referred to the October minutes which gives a good overview of the work recently completed and encouraged Commissioners to keep the minutes available for future review.

Tom Unger introduced Mike Rohrer who is their new planner, with over 20 years of planning experience.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the October 6, 2021 minutes. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mrs. Bressler.

Motion carried.

General Discussion

Tom Unger said that he will be reviewing the items that the former Planner was working on to ensure that all work is completed and referred to a summary sheet that Mrs. Madeira had provided.

Mr. Wert reviewed the Zoning definitions from the October minutes and referred to the Solicitor's comments regarding the definitions. One of the recommendations was that all definitions be capitalized for uniformity however this may require a major expenditure with General Code if the entire ordinance must be repealed and restated. Mr. Wert asked that staff check with General Code to determine what the cost would be, however noted that the change must be completed regardless, to which the Commissioners agreed.

Discussion ensued regarding the 'Mixed-Use' zone as proposed by Derck and Edson and Mr. Unger asked whether this change should be a rezoning of the specific areas or created as an overlay district. Mr. Unger noted that a rezoning of the specific areas already identified may not have the desired effect. He and Mr. Rohrer will review this section further and bring some recommendations back to the Commission. It was also noted that Buttonwood Street needs to have further consideration to determine what the eventual outcome should be. The Light Industrial zone was also briefly discussed with regards to how many such areas are actually needed in the Borough. Esterly Concrete was given as an example of a Light Industrial use in a completely residential area, and what the potential future of that space could be, given that the owner has already offered the property for sale. Mr. Wert will reach out to Mark Evans at Derck and Edson regarding the mixed-use targeted blocks.

Mr. Wert also noted that moving forward with 'Form-Based Codes' per the D&E proposal is impossible at this point because of a lack of funding. He noted that anticipated State funding has been delayed due to the census outcome and the potential political redistricting of West Reading by the State.

Mr. Wert confirmed that Mr. Unger had a copy of the officially adopted redevelopment plan from D&E and noted that there were some recommendations in the document that SDE should familiarize themselves with, one being side yard adjustments that need to be made because the setbacks just don't make sense. Any such changes could be placed in a comprehensive zoning amendment, once the proposed changes are discussed.

As a final note, Mr. Wert said that the Commission will get back on track with the proposed changes such as the animal ordinance amendment in December.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mrs. Bressler.

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Hoffman
Zoning Officer