

Borough of West Reading
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
January 10, 2022

Committee Members Present

In person: Philip Wert, Jack Gombach, Mayor Samantha Kaag, Dean Murray, Mark Ratcliffe
By Zoom: Aaron Gantz, Heidi Reuter, Robin Horman

Staff Present

Cathy Hoffman

Visitors Present

Patrick Kaag

Call to Order

Mr. Wert called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. and welcomed new members Mayor Samantha Kaag and Jack Gombach.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Approval of the Minutes

Motion made by Ms. Reuter and seconded by Mr. Gombach to approve the minutes of December 13, 2021. Motion carried.

Residential Properties Update

Mr. Wert reported that he had spoken with the developer of the nine remaining townhomes who indicated that they should be complete at the end of February. The developer also indicated that he will be renting the units initially rather than selling them until his next project is in the works.

West Reading Commercial Properties Update

- 416 Penn – The Motor Club will be opening in early February.
- 428 Penn – Construction continues. The exterior still lacks sheathing.
- 433 Penn – The property is on the market. There is potential interest in building a convenience store at that location.
- 450 Penn – The property remains vacant and Mr. Wert requested an update.
- 635 Penn – Gem on Penn is relocating to this property. This will leave a vacancy at 611 Penn.
- 20-22 N. Sixth – Trish’s Specialty Cheesecakes is the new tenant for the first floor.
- 36 N. 6th – “Takkii” will be opening in February.

Also of note:

- A coffee and sandwich shop is proposed for 10 S. 5th Avenue.
- Tony’s Al Taglio is now known as ‘Tony’s of West Reading’.

Strategic Planning Discussion

- Wyomissing Report – Mr. Woodward was unable to attend the meeting.
- Strategic Planning Next Steps
 1. Pocket Park – Plans for the park are being placed on hold for several reasons, one being the dumpsters at Chef Alans. Discussion ensued regarding the potential redevelopment

of the Shopping Center which is dependent on the approval of a TIF. Representatives of the developer will attend the WASD's Finance Committee on January 19th to discuss the possibility of a Tax Increment Financing Agreement being approved.

2. Design Standards – Potential sources of funding for the implementation of form-based codes was discussed. Mr. Gombach will explore some grant possibilities and forward information to the Committee.
3. Façade Program – Derck and Edson will be assisting with design elements of the Façade program given that some owners/business owners need some expertise. Also, some of the more worn façades will be recommended for design advice and grant funding.

Old/New Business

There was nothing additional to report.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Hoffman
Code Enforcement Department