

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
JULY 3, 2024**

The West Reading Planning Commission met for their regular meeting on Wednesday, July 3, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chair Philip Wert; Members Cody Rhoads, Daniel Horman, Jennifer Bressler, and Kacie Rodriguez; Zoning Officer and Code Department Manager Chad Moyer; Borough Manager Randall P. Miller; and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira. Vice Chair Christopher Lincoln and Member Zanna Leiendecker were unable to attend.

**Visitors**

Mark Evans, Derck & Edson, LLC

Mr. Wert called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion to approve the June 5, 2024 minutes. **Moved** by Ms. Rodriguez and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried.**

**New Business**

- a. **Continued Review of a Final Draft of Downtown Zoning Ordinance** – Mr. Evans noted that recommendations to the Regulating Plan have been implemented.

Maximum lot coverages were discussed at length. It was noted that pervious pavers/macadam have been recognized in past practices, although maintenance of these types of surfaces are not actively monitored.

The correlation or trigger in achieving lower impervious coverages with Best Management Practices, regardless of the lot size or area of improvement, would need to be reviewed by the engineer's office to avoid inconsistencies between the Zoning Ordinance, stormwater management portion of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, and the Stormwater Management chapter of the code of ordinances.

It was unclear if the current maximum lot coverages have inhibited economic development over the years. Coordinated stormwater management solutions were recommended to be reviewed and possibly implemented in conjunction with civic spaces throughout the borough. Mr. Evans spoke of establishing a fee to address stormwater impervious standards borough-wide thereby alleviating individual property owners from establishing stormwater controls on smaller lot sizes.

The correlation of topics beyond zoning of the downtown district that were recommended to be reviewed were stormwater management, design of off-street parking requirements, and civic space design.

To encourage innovative solutions to maximum lot coverages it was decided to retain the existing percentages by district within the final draft to accomplish MS4 program goals.

Supplemental Design Standards – The reference to menu boards located a minimum of 50' from district boundary lines was agreed to be removed from the draft ordinance.

Section 455-114 Edging Elements – The allowance of an ornamental fence within the Main Street Frontage area was discussed within the clarified area of the 400 through mid-600 blocks of Penn Avenue. It was decided due to the proximity of building placements to the curb to not further impede the flow of pedestrian traffic by allowing fences. No changes were recommended to the proposed draft regulations, including the maximum height restriction of 42".

Section 455-115 Encroachments – Existing ordinance standards allow awnings to extend 4’ into the right-of-way. The maximum allowance to project 14’, or to within 2’ of the face of the curb was a concern for streetlights or trees. It was decided to increase the encroachment to within 4’ of the face of the curb, and no lower than 10’ above the sidewalk.

Section 455-116 Supplemental Design Standards – The ability to locate drive-throughs in the Central or General Business Districts, limited to parcels with the ability to allow vehicles to access or exit the facility from a secondary street, not a primary frontage, was thought to not be conducive to a walkable community. It was decided to not allow drive-throughs within the borough.

Zoning Ordinance Text Changes Section 455-33 Definitions – The redline definitions were reviewed and found to be acceptable. The recommended allowed use districts for Ghost Kitchens were recapped with Mr. Evans to ensure the use chart would be updated to allow this use in the Light Industrial and Gateway Districts.

The removal of a civic space designation within Delaney Circle was reviewed and noted to be the largest proposed designation of civic space within the borough. Mr. Evans noted that the master plan revised the demographics of this traffic circle to be more pedestrian friendly. Commission members were in favor of creating civic spaces that would also serve as a method to address stormwater management issues borough wide.

Mr. Evans clarified the fee-in-lieu of civic space question as a one-time fee that is established by resolution on an annual basis.

Issues surrounding privately owned development on sites greater than 10,000 square feet requiring the designation of public civic space were discussed as far as liability and design standards. Mr. Miller recommended adding definitions of stormwater and best management practices. Mr. Evans agreed to add verbiage to incorporate stormwater management practices within the civic space standards.

Mr. Evans indicated that the meeting coverage portion of the contracted scope of services has exceeded the contract and requested consideration to continue these services on a time and material basis. A portion of the contract included \$3,000 to employ the services of Walker Parking Consultants to assist in updating parking standards in both residential and commercial settings. Walker Parking Consultants were welcome to attend future meetings to provide a presentation. The sign aspect of review would be reserved until the completion of the zoning review. Mr. Wert requested staff to find funding within the current budget to continue the review based on Mr. Evan’s draft of a proposal regarding the time needed to complete the draft zoning amendments and navigate the adoption process.

Based on aerial views of impervious and pervious coverages, Mr. Miller inquired as to parameters of a facility that would address the stormwater needs of the business district as far as space that would be needed and the fee that would be associated with parcels that would discharge to this type of facility. Mr. Evans noted an annual stormwater management fee that was recently established in his community to assist in funding and maintaining the necessary facility. Mr. Evans plans to provide an example for the borough’s use.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira  
Borough Secretary