

BOROUGH OF WEST READING PLANNING COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2015

The West Reading Planning Commission met for their regular meeting on Wednesday, June 3, 2015 at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chair Philip Wert, Christopher Lincoln, Jennifer Bressler, Terry Siggins and Christin Kelley. Kim Collins and Maxine Goodwin were unable to attend.

VISITORS: Kate Keppen, Berks County Conservation District
Rich Sichler, Borough Manager
Tom Unger, Engineer, SDE, Inc.

Mr. Wert called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

MS4 Presentation

Kate Keppen was in attendance to provide information to the Commission concerning state stormwater regulations and noted the following:

- She spoke about what happens when stormwater erodes fields, grasslands and stream banks and the negative impact it has on aquatic life when the phosphorus in the stormwater binds with the sediment and promotes algae growth.
- The Berks County MS4 Steering Committee is comprised of 36 municipalities as well as other organizations who work together on stormwater issues.
- The Wyomissing Creek is a high quality stream but it is impaired therefore urbanized areas must monitor how they are impacting it.
- Positive change includes the following:
 - Public outreach and education involvement
 - Illicit discharge detection and elimination
 - Construction site stormwater runoff control
 - Post construction stormwater management
 - Pollution prevention and good housekeeping
- Information was provided for engaging the community in stormwater management such as planting trees, volunteering for stream/street cleanups, planting native vegetation that requires less water, and using less salt during the winter months.
- Also recommended were the use of rain barrels and rain gardens.
- Mr. Sichler noted that he routinely inspects outfalls to the Wyomissing Creek and has found three illicit outfalls over the last five years which were corrected. He said that this work is carried out as part of the Wyomissing Creek Watershed Stormwater Coalition.

SALDO Update

A partial review of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance update has been completed by Commission members, therefore questions and suggested corrections were directed to Mr. Unger. The majority of suggested changes were minor in nature however some of the items to be added/amended are:

- A definition is needed for 'arterial street'.
- The number of plan copies needs to be changed to a total of 5 with an electronic copy.
- The Shade Tree Commission should review not just residential plans but commercial as well.

- The 'fee in lieu of' that pertains to residential plans should also apply to commercial plans if allowed by the MPC.
- The necessity of holding a public hearing prior to acting on a preliminary plan was questioned.
- The creation or sale of a tract of land pertaining to minimum dimensions in §306 C.(1)(a) was questioned.
- A question was raised regarding the recording of the approved plan; whether it would be the applicant or borough staff.
- As-built drawings should be submitted to the Borough rather than the engineer.
- It was recommended that all applications concerning land development or zoning include the applicant's email address.
- The reference to trails in §403 C.(13) needs to be clarified.
- A general comment needs to be added to §404 stipulating that all final plans must be reviewed by emergency services, ie. Police, Fire and EMS.

The Commission will continue to review the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance at the July meeting, beginning with Part 5.

UCC Permit Regulations vs Borough Requirements

Mr. Unger provided three documents that refer to permitting requirements for both the Borough and the State. He noted that the State requires permits predominately for new construction and issues that concern safety, while the Borough requires permits for almost everything. This issue was discussed at length, and given that Mr. Siggins has done a great amount of research concerning this topic, he was asked to prepare a list of items that he feels should not require permits. Mr. Wert asked that he have it prepared in advance of the next meeting so Commission can discuss it further at the July meeting.

It was also noted that the Property Maintenance Code will have to be reviewed as part of this process. Discussion ensued regarding properties in the Borough that sustained damage during the hail storm last year and have not yet been repaired.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Hoffman
Administrative Assistant