

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING  
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 1, 2015**

The West Reading Planning Commission met for their regular meeting on Wednesday, July 1, 2015 at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chair Philip Wert, Christopher Lincoln, Jennifer Bressler, Maxine Goodwin, Terry Siggins and Christin Kelley. Kim Collins was unable to attend. Borough Engineer Tom Unger was also in attendance.

**VISITORS:** None

Mr. Wert called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

**City of Reading Draft Comprehensive Plan**

It was noted that the City had submitted a copy of their draft Comprehensive Plan to Borough planning officials for their review. A copy had been distributed to all Planning Commission members. A response with comments was requested within 45 days therefore Mr. Wert will prepare the response.

**SALDO Update**

Review of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance continued beginning with Part 5, Design Standards. The following items were discussed in particular:

- The current Comprehensive Plan includes Sinking Spring, Spring Township, and Wyomissing along with West Reading. It was questioned whether the reference in §501 A. should include the other communities, or whether it should simply state the Borough's Comprehensive Plan, in the event that the Borough should revise the plan on its own. It was the consensus that it be stated as the Borough Comprehensive Plan.
- 503 A. (10) speaks about the naming of streets in new developments. It has been the practice to refer to alleys as "Way", however in the case of Walnut Street, the alley in the Belovich development is also known as Walnut Street. This will need to be discussed further.
- A part of 503 B. (1) (a) deals with off street parking. This will need to be discussed further with Mr. Heilman.
- 503 B. (5) (g) deals with clear sight triangles. It was noted that as written, the distances seem to be too large for a borough such as West Reading. Mr. Unger agreed and will research it further.
- Cul-de-sac requirements in 503 B. (6) were discussed and it was determined that language should be added so that they are almost prohibited unless specific circumstances dictate their need.
- 503 B. (8) regarding service streets should not be prohibited as written. This section should either be rewritten to fit West Reading's needs or removed altogether. Mr. Heilman will review.
- 506 B. states that driveways shall be provided for all new lots which is a departure from existing situations in the Borough. Discussion ensued with regard to subdivided lots or apartment buildings. Although this would pertain to only new land development, it should be discussed further. There was also a question concerning driveway permits and whether the Borough uses a specific permit in this regard. This will need to be ascertained for the proper terminology and Mr. Heilman will review this section.

- 507 A. refers to sidewalks and there was some discussion concerning the width of sidewalks in the Borough but it was decided to leave it at 4' as long as that meets the criteria for ADA regulations. There was a question as well concerning driveway permits
- 508 B. (4) was discussed with regard to the depth to width ratio and was found to be correct.
- §513 refers to Landscaping and Buffering. It was noted that a definition needs to be created for buffer yards. Because the Borough has a Shade Tree Commission, it was felt that this section should be reviewed in depth by them. **Moved** by Christin Kelley and seconded by Chris Lincoln that the Shade Tree Commission be requested to review Section 513 of the proposed Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance in its entirety at their July 14<sup>th</sup> meeting, and that they report back to the Planning Commission by the August 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. **Motion carried.**

### **UCC Permit Regulations vs Borough Requirements**

Mr. Siggins had been tasked with comparing the UCC regulations to those that the Borough currently requires. The initial discussion concerned the non-standard heights of many basements in the Borough and whether Borough inspectors would have leeway to approve a basement renovation without the required 7' height. Mr. Unger will do some investigating to determine what can be done.

The Commission discussed the attached list, and noted the following:

- Replacement of shingles without a permit should be allowed, however replacement of sheathing and structural changes would require a permit.
- The replacement of water heaters should probably require a permit – Mr. Unger will look at it further, as well as the replacement of electrical fixtures, outlets, and the finishing of basements.
- Replacement of decking that is non-structural was also discussed and Mr. Unger will provide additional comments.

A general discussion about the upkeep of properties in the Borough followed, with particular regard as to how to proceed in the future to keep the Borough looking good.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Hoffman  
Administrative Assistant