

BOROUGH OF WEST READING PLANNING COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2015

The West Reading Planning Commission met for their regular meeting on Wednesday, September 2, 2015 at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chair Philip Wert, Christopher Lincoln, Jennifer Bressler, Terry Siggins (left at 8:05 p.m.), Maxine Goodwin and Christin Kelley. Kim Collins were unable to attend. Borough Engineer Tom Unger was also in attendance.

Visitors: None

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

SALDO Update

Review of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance continued beginning with Part 6. The following items were discussed in particular:

- §603 dealing with acceptance of streets and improvements needs to include working that will require a final walkthrough before the final paying is complete (wearing course).
- §702(c) concerning the inspection of improvements indicates that 48 hours' notice is necessary to be given to the Borough Secretary. Is this per the MPC or should it be 2 working days' notice to the Borough Engineer or Manager.
- §704 discusses the Public Hearing. Is this required by the MPC?
- §803 Schedule of Application Fees should state that the developer shall pay the fees to the Borough and not "Borough Secretary, to the use of the Borough".
- §809 Enforcement Remedies refers to a judgement of not more than \$500. This amount was questioned.

General Code Codification Project

The Codification project was discussed in general, in particular the way in which the new document is delineated. It was felt that the changes proposed by the Planning Commission over the last few months of review need to be double checked to see if in fact that were incorporated therefore Mrs. Hoffman will combine the sections of both documents that were particularly discussed. Review of Chapter IV continued as follows:

- Part 3 - Tenant registration was discussed and it was recommended that Ms. Madeira (Secretary of the Codes Department) be asked to review the section to determine if anything needs to be changed such as the submission dates, the maximum fine amount etc.
- Part 4 – The Property Maintenance Code was last adopted in 2006 however the most current version of the International Property Maintenance Code was adopted in 2012 or 2013. Mr. Unger indicated that it is normally updated every two or three years therefore an update will soon be available.
- §402(e) regarding verbal warnings was discussed with particular regard to its lack of use in the past.

- After some discussion it was decided that the International Property Maintenance Code should also be reviewed by the Commission as a comparison with the Borough's Code. This would be of particular assistance with exterior property issues that the Borough faces. Mr. Unger was asked if copies could be obtained for the Commission or the document emailed.
- §504 discusses penalties for dangerous structures and it was questioned if \$1000 is sufficient. It was noted that this particular section has not been updated since 1980 therefore Mr. Unger will need to review it further to see if it is still relevant for the Borough's needs. It was also noted that the Borough is currently using the PMC to obtain the administrative warrants that are necessary to secure the abandoned properties in the Borough. This section will be compared with the new General Code section to determine if the section is still necessary.
- Part 6 concerning "Graffiti" was adopted in 2003. Mr. Wert spoke of an incident where perceived graffiti on private property ended up being art that the owner gave permission to have painted. Much discussion ensued regarding what is art for some is graffiti for others and vice versa. §606 concerning the graffiti abatement hearing states that 'the determination of the Code Enforcement Officer after the hearing shall be final and not appealable'. It was questioned if this is legal and is there any case law to back it up. Some research will be required in this regard.

Mr. Unger indicated that it is his intent to have the updated SALDO as well as the draft UCC ready for review at the October 7th meeting. Mr. Wert asked that the draft documents be emailed to Mr. Becker as well as Commission members as soon as they are ready.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Hoffman
Administrative Assistant