

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
SEPTEMBER 3, 2025**

The West Reading Planning Commission met for their regular meeting on Wednesday, September 3, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chairman Philip Wert; Vice Chairman Christopher Lincoln; Members Jennifer Bressler, Daniel Horman and Cody Rhoads; Zoning Officer and Code Department Manager Chad Moyer; Borough Manager Randall Miller; and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira. Members Zanna Leierendecker and Kacie Rodriguez were unable to attend.

**Visitors**

Mark Evans, Derck & Edson

Nicholas Johnson, Johnson Environmental Engineering

Troy Spade, Systems Design Engineering

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

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion to approve minutes of the May 7, 2025 meeting. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Horman. **Motion carried 5-0.**

**New Business**

a. **Draft ordinances for impervious coverage, stormwater, and civic space design standards**

Mr. Evans noted that Mr. Spade is sitting in for Ms. Stevens this evening to assist in the discussion on direction and strategies to improve stormwater management and civic space design while allowing certain increases in impervious coverage. Most sites within the Downtown Overlay District are already 90 to 100% lot coverage, the current zoning only allows 60 to 80% lot coverage with no provision for allowing higher coverage. Potential ordinance provisions would allow these increases in imperviousness within the Conditional Use approval process that engages Borough Council in the decision-making process. The conditional use process could require applicants to build or fund new civic spaces, new stormwater improvements, rehabilitation of existing improvements or a combination of civic space and stormwater management improvements.

The inclusion of districts within these regulations was discussed. Mr. Lincoln recommended including the Institutional District. Standards would need to be calibrated specifically for the Institutional District to improve stormwater management as opposed to the creation of civic space. The scope of work needs to be discussed to include the Institutional District. It was decided to discuss the framework prior to discussing this added scope of work.

Mr. Johnson reviewed the impervious coverage map stating that the parcels outlined in red are 95 to 100% impervious coverage. The parcels located in the Residential Professional District have not yet been evaluated. It was stated that the conceived ordinance amendments would only apply to newly developed parcels or parcels within the Central and General Business Districts and Light Industrial District that are currently below the 75 to 80% coverage limits. All impervious coverages dating back to 2010 would be grandfathered. The overarching intent of these regulations is to focus on larger redevelopment projects that may unfold soon within the Central Business District and "Chocolate District".

Improvements to existing stormwater facilities could be contributed towards with a fee in lieu of meeting the coverage limit on smaller parcel redevelopment projects. Challenges associated with a fee in lieu of meeting regulations would require a list of projects and associated costs and a timely implementation of improvements. Mr. Miller stated that a stormwater internment could be built by the borough and a fee such as an EDU assessed. Legal feedback is needed.

Proposed targeted examples will be provided for both civic space and stormwater improvements to allow 5 to 10% increases in impervious coverage for building or funding stormwater management such as bio-filtration swales, tree pit with stormwater infiltration, curb bump out with stormwater infiltration, civic space with stormwater management features, green roofs or an urban root system.

Civic spaces were preferred in the Central Business District and stormwater improvements were preferred borough wide. Regional opportunities could be realized along the river that could address both civic space and stormwater improvements while creating a recreation component that would benefit the public. The history of safety concerns over the years caused by limited access and remoteness need to be addressed.

Mr. Johnson reviewed the decision-making flowchart and requested feedback on applying standards to new impervious or new and existing impervious coverages. It was thought that existing impervious coverages should be addressed to achieve desired results. Mr. Evans spoke of a parking facility with a foundation that could address stormwater needs as well as parking needs that may qualify for grant funding to offset expenses. Mr. Spade recommended looking into Green Streets funding through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

Examples of recent redevelopment projects such as the Lofts at Narrow, Motor Club and the new structure on Penn Avenue would be reviewed for opportunities to address civic space and stormwater amenities in future redevelopment projects. Changes in use and zoning appeals could be triggers in requiring improvements. Aspects of these regulations could be adopted in short order should there be plans under way to redevelop a large area or parcel. Mr. Evans noted that minimal aspects of civic space regulations were recently adopted in the comprehensive zoning amendment. Updates will be presented next month for consideration.

Mr. Johnson and Mr. Evans departed the meeting at 7:49 p.m.

**b. Ratify letters of support for grant opportunities**

Ratification of letters of support were requested for three grant application opportunities with submittal deadlines in the past.

Motion to ratify letters of support to the Pennsylvania Multimodal Transportation Fund and Local Share Account for the Fifth Avenue and Pine Street pedestrian crossing upgrades, Playground Drive curb, sidewalk and ADA ramp replacements, and trail improvements and two pedestrian bridge replacements in the park. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Mr. Spade departed the meeting at 7:52 p.m.

**c. Quality of life violation regulations**

Mr. Moyer adapted the nuisance ordinance to a quality of life ordinance that would allow the issuance of incremental fines for nuisance type violations. The current ability to enforce regulations through the Property Maintenance Code requires the lengthy process of filing a citation at the District Justice office and awaiting a decision to appeal and attend a hearing, all while the violation remains. The appeal process, from the examples used to draft regulations, was to the department head. Quality of life

regulations are focused on nuisances to neighboring properties, that include animal violations for barking, fecal matter, and tethering. Mr. Moyer requested review of the list of violations to provide feedback on what may be overzealous or missing from the list. Quicker compliance is desirable, and a legal review will be requested.

**Adjournment**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 p.m. by Mrs. Bressler and seconded by Mr. Horman.

**Motion carried 5-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira  
Borough Secretary