

City of Reading Planning Commission Meeting

Meeting Minutes: February 24, 2026

<u>PC Members Present</u> Chairman Wayne Jonas Bealer Vice Chairman Will Cinfici Commissioner James Harris Commissioner Nelson De Leon Commissioner Peter Rye	<u>Staff and Consultants Present</u> Simon Wangolo, Planning Manager Emily Diaz-Melendez, Planner III Jess Royer, Planner I Jerome Skrincosky, AICP, Planning Consultant Michelle Mayfield, Solicitor Don Edwards, City Engineer Enid Narvaez, Finance Jaime Baez Jr, City Council Liaison
<u>Others Present</u> Wayne Gehris, Item 6c Aristides Otero, Item 6c John Hoffert, Item 6b Antonio Batista, Item 7a Louis Masciotti, Item 7a Matt Boarder, Item 6d Kevin Marmas, Item 6d	<u>Via Zoom:</u> Raymundo Taveras, Item 6a Cesar Lopez, Item 6e Dan Laudenslayer, Item 6e Joan London, Item 7a Christopher Muvdi, Item 7b Erin McKechnie, Item 7b Mike Micozzi, Item 7b Press: BCTV, WFMZ, Reading Eagle

(1) **Call Meeting to Order** Chaiman Bealer called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

(2) **Acknowledgement of Planning Commission Members in Attendance**

(3) **Accept the Planning Commission Meeting Agenda:** A motion to accept the agenda was made by Peter Rye, seconded by Nelson De Leon, and approved unanimously (5-0).

(4) **Approval of Previous Meeting(s) Minutes:** None

(5) **Public Comments:** None

(6) **Subdivision and Land Developments Plan Reviews**

a. **PC 2023-117 – 138 S 8th Street**

- **Application:** Revised Annexation and Land Development Plan
- **Correspondence:** 138 South 8th Street Annexation and Land Development Plan Conditions of Approval and Site Inspection Report, Hawk Valley Associates, February 11th, 2026
- **Discussion:** The applicant discussed the timing of the work to be done and the remaining steps as required by various city departments, with no foreseen issues.

- **Action:** None
- b. SALDO-2512-0025 – Iglesia Cristiana Casa del Rey (544 & 556 N 9th St)**
- **Application:** Revised Annexation and Land Development Plan
 - **Correspondence:** Iglesia Cristiana Casa Del Rey Annexation and Land Development Plan Revised Preliminary/Final Plan Application Review, Hawk Valley Associates, February 12th, 2026
 - **Discussion:** Applicant addressed the required actions regarding sidewalks and landscaping.
 - **Actions:**
 - A motion to grant preliminary/final approval for Iglesia Cristiana Casa Del Rey Annexation and Land Development Plan [SALDO #2512-0025] subject to applicant resolving all issues in review letter issued by Hawk Valley Associates dated February 12th, 2026 was made by Commissioner Rye, seconded by Commissioner Harris, and passed unanimously (5-0).
 - A motion to authorize the Chairman to execute the Municipal Improvements Agreement was made by Commissioner De Leon, seconded by Commissioner Rye, and passed unanimously (5-0).
- c. SALDO-2601-0001 – Reading School District Northeast Middle School**
- **Application:** Preliminary/Final Plan Application
 - **Correspondence:** Northeast Middle School Land Development Plan Preliminary/Final Plan Application Review, Hawk Valley Associates, February 16th, 2026
 - **Discussion:** In response to the review letter issued by Hawk Valley Associates, Mr. Otero indicated that the district would be able to address the landscaping modifications and the lighting plan. Mr. Otero, Mr. Gehris, and Mr. Skrinkosky discussed current and projected parking availability with the focus on avoiding any midblock pedestrian crossings. At Planner Diaz-Melendez's request, Mr. Otero addressed the comments from the Berks County Planning Commission regarding both the deed reference and the proposed trench drains. Mr. Gehris responded to Commissioner Cinfici regarding clarification around the remaining parking following the upcoming modifications.
 - **Actions:**
 - A motion to grant preliminary/final plan approval for the Northeast Middle School Land Development Plan [SALDO #2601-0001] subject to applicant resolving all issues in the Hawk Valley Associates review letter dated February 16th, 2026 was made by Commissioner Rye, seconded by Commissioner Harris, and passed unanimously (5-0).

- A motion to authorize the Chairman to execute the Municipal Improvements Agreement and Stormwater Management Agreement was made by Commissioner Rye, seconded by Commissioner De Leon, and passed unanimously (5-0).
- d. **SALDO-2602-0002 – Alvernia University - Main Campus Pavilion (UPI 18530619605786)**
- **Application:** Final Land Development Plan
 - **Correspondence:** Alvernia University Main Campus Pavilion Final Land Development Plan Review, Hawk Valley Associates, February 17, 2026
 - **Discussion:** Mr. Marmas addressed the stormwater management report, as well as the details and planning schedule with specific types of plants, in accordance with guidelines issued by the state. Mr. Marmas also discussed the timeline
 - **Action:** A motion to table the matter was made by Commissioner Cinfici, seconded by Commissioner Harris, and passed with Commissioner Rye abstaining from the vote due to his position as a trustee for Alvernia University (4-0-1).
- e. **SALDO-2602-0003 – Eternity Youth Adult Day Care Center (118 S 9th St)**
- **Application:** Change of Use Preliminary/Final Plan
 - **Correspondence:** Eternity Daycare Facility Land Development Plan Preliminary/Final Plan Application Review, Hawk Valley Associates, February 18th, 2026
 - **Discussion:** Mr. Laudenslayer sought clarification around the off-street parking options, which Planner Diaz-Melendez addressed. Mr. Lopez expressed his appreciation for the Planning Commission and staff's engagement and offered himself to help with any questions. Commissioner Rye asked about the extent of the renovations and application, which Mr. Laudenslayer clarified that the current focus is on the ground floor. Mr. Skrinkosky and Planner Diaz-Melendez both recommended submitting a sewer module that could account for the potential utilization of the second floor in the future. Commissioner Cinfici asked about an above-ground storage tank on the north side of the driveway.
 - **Action:** A motion to table the matter was made by Commissioner Rye, seconded by Commissioner Harris, and passed unanimously (5-0).
- f. **SALDO-2602-0004 – 601 Penn St**
- **Application:** Revised Plan of Record (exempted from standard procedure.)
 - **Correspondence:** 610 Penn Street Revised Plan of Record Preliminary/Final Plan Review, Hawk Valley Associates, February 19, 2026
 - **Discussion:** Ms. Diaz-Melendez reported that the Berks County Planning Commission will not need to review the revised plan. Chairman Bealer noted that he disagreed with the applicant's attorney's letter that the building and use represented an 'existing condition' and wanted the record to reflect that.

- **Action:** A motion to table the revised plan of record was made by Commissioner Rye, seconded by Commissioner Harris, and passed unanimously (5-0).

(7) Waiver Requests

a. 317 Franklin Street

- Discussion centered around available parking and approval from fire, and the requirements to take the project up to the next level.
- **Action:** A motion to approve a waiver request from producing a land development plan that includes two phases and to defer a land development plan until a certificate of occupancy is issued was made by Commissioner Rye, seconded by Commissioner De Leon, and passed unanimously (5-0).

b. 700 Lancaster Avenue

- Waiver request has been issued based on all renovation work being done internally.
 - A motion to grant land development waiver for 700 Lancaster Ave with the condition that the applicant provide a sewer flow narrative showing a comparison with projected vs previous uses, with the understanding that if the projected flows exceed previous uses the applicant would need to submit a sewer module, as well as compliance with comments from any other departments within the City of Reading was made by Commissioner De Leon, seconded by Commissioner Harris, and passed unanimously (5-0).

(8) Zoning Ordinance Amendments

a. Part 16: Parking and Loading

- A subcommittee was convened to discuss this potential amendment, comprised of members from the Planning Commission, City Council, and various staff and consultants.

b. TOD Overlay Amendment

- The Berks County Planning Commission did issue comments on the proposed language for this amendment, and staff are in the process of scheduling a final presentation from the consultant assisting in developing it. Commissioner Rye shared some thoughts based on conversations he's had with developers about how/whether the TOD provides any significant value to development in the City of Reading.

c. Zoning Ordinance (Flood Plain Administrator)

- Planner Diaz-Melendez presented a proposal that would have the city's designated Flood Plain Administrator be a part of the City Engineer position, as opposed to the Zoning Administrator. Discussion centered around the need to have a competent Flood Plain Administrator in place and the pros and cons of permanently assigning this role to the City Engineer position vs the city employee who is most experienced in flood plain management.

- **Action:** A motion to table the matter was made by Commissioner Rye, seconded by Commissioner De Leon, and passed unanimously (5-0).

(9) Reports

a. PA DCED MTF Application – 500 block of Penn St Parking Redesign

- Ms. Narvaez shared an overview of the 2nd Phase of the City's project regarding parking along Penn Street, using a Multimodal Transportation Fund grant from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development.
- **Action:** A motion to authorize staff to write a letter of support for the City's application for the Multimodal Transportation Fund grant for the 500 block of Penn St Parking Redesign was made by Commissioner Rye, seconded by Commissioner De Leon, and passed unanimously (5-0).

(10) Public Comments: No public comments

(11) Upcoming Meetings

- a. Next Planning Commission Workshop Meeting – March 17, 2026 @ 5:30 pm
- b. Next Regular Planning Commission Meetings – March 24, 2026 @ 6:00 pm

(12) Adjournment:

- a. Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Rye, seconded by Commissioner Harris, and passed unanimously. Chairman Bealer adjourned the meeting at 8:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jess Royer, Planner I