

City of Reading Planning Commission Meeting
Meeting Minutes: April 26, 2022

PC Members Present

Wayne Bealer
Lee Olsen, AIA
Will Cinfici
Nelson DeLeon
Peter Rye

Staff and Consultants Present

Jamal Abodalo, Director of Community Development Services
Jerome Skrincosky, AICP, HVA Planning and Zoning Consultant
Tim Krall, PE, Public Works Department
Bethany Ayers Fisher, Public Works Department
Michelle Mayfield, Esquire, Legal Consultant
Shannon Calluri, Zoning Administrator
Emily Diaz-Melendez, Zoning Officer

Others Present

Dan Laudenslayer, PLS (PC Agenda 3, 4, 5 and 14)
Branden Bialek, PS (PC Agenda 8)
Gregg Bogia, PE (PC Agenda 9, 12 and 13)
Craig Bonenberger (PC Agenda 11)
Joan London, Esq. (PC Agenda 12 and 13)
Andrew Roland (PC Agenda 12 and 13)

- (1) **Call Meeting to Order:** Chairman Bealer called the meeting to order at 6:16 pm.

- (2) **Acknowledgement of PC Members in Attendance and PC Meeting Agenda**
 - (a) Planning Commission Members in Attendance: Wayne Bealer; Will Cinfici; Lee Olsen; Nelson DeLeon; and Peter Rye
 - (b) Planning Commission Agenda: The Planning Commission was advised that the agenda was posted in accordance with all prevailing requirements. Commissioner Cinfici made a motion to accept the Planning Commission Meeting Agenda for April 26, 2022. Commissioner Rye seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0)

- (3) **Elm Street Daycare Annexation/Land Development Plan; Preliminary/Final Plan Application**
 - (a) Application: The Applicant (G&A Investment Corp) has submitted a revised Preliminary/Final Plan Application for review and consideration. The project includes the annexation of six (6) parcels of land located at 1010 Elm Street and the redevelopment of the property/building as a daycare facility with 23 off-street parking spaces and other related site improvements. Zoning relief was previously granted by the Zoning Hearing Board via ZHB Appeal 2020-24.
 - (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on April 11, 2022. The Plan was also previously reviewed by other departments and agencies.
 - (c) Discussion: The Applicant has resolved most of the comments issued within the Hawk Valley Associates letter. The sewage facility planning requirements were approved by the

departments and agencies with jurisdiction. An agreement shall be required for any required curb and sidewalk improvements that are required by the Public Works Department. All site improvements shall be completed prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the building and use.

- (d) Action on the Plan: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to approve the Preliminary/Final Plan Application for the Elm Street Daycare Annexation and Land Development Plan, subject to the Applicant resolving all issues referenced within the review letter issued by Hawk Valley Associates on April 11, 2022. Commissioner Rye seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).
- (e) Action on Site Improvements: Commissioner DeLeon made a motion to authorize the Planning Commission Chairman to execute the improvements agreement and/or stormwater maintenance agreement that may be required for this project. Commissioner Olsen seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(4) Prince and Princesses Daycare Annexation and Land Development Plan; Preliminary/Final Plan Application

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Sor Angel Ferreras De Perez) has submitted a revised Preliminary/Final Plan Application for review and consideration. The project includes the annexation of two (2) parcels of land located at 936 and 938 Penn Street and redevelopment of the property/building as a daycare facility with 12 off-street parking spaces and other related site improvements. Zoning relief was previously granted by the Zoning Hearing Board via ZHB Appeal 2020-03.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on April 11, 2022. The Plan was also previously reviewed by other departments and agencies.
- (c) Discussion: The Applicant has resolved most of the comments issued within the Hawk Valley Associates letter. The sewage facility planning requirements were approved by the departments and agencies with jurisdiction. An agreement shall be required for any required driveway, curb and sidewalk improvements that are required by the Public Works Department. All site improvements shall be completed prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the building and use.
- (d) Action on the Plan: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to approve the Preliminary/Final Plan Application for the Prince and Princesses Daycare Annexation and Land Development Plan, subject to the Applicant resolving all issues referenced within the review letter issued by Hawk Valley Associates on April 11, 2022. Commissioner Cinfici seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0)
- (e) Action on Site Improvements: Commissioner Rye made a motion to authorize the Planning Commission Chairman to execute the improvements agreement and/or stormwater maintenance agreement that may be required for this project. Commissioner DeLeon seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(5) Iglesias Pentecostal Land Development Plan; Preliminary Plan Application

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Iglesias Pentecostal Movimento De Fe) has submitted a Preliminary Land Development Plan for review and consideration. This development is located at 1124 Schuylkill Avenue and 1119 Luzerne Street. The Applicant proposes to redevelop and convert these properties to a place of worship. Zoning relief was previously granted by the Zoning Hearing Board via ZHB Appeal 2020-12.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on April 19, 2022. The Plan was also previously reviewed by other departments and agencies.

- (c) Discussion: The Planning Commission raised concerns with: land use compatibility; site accessibility; driveways; off-street parking; stormwater management; utility services; curbs and sidewalks; and other related issues.
- (d) Action: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to table action on the plan. Commissioner Cinfici seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(6) Hope Rescue Mission Subdivision and Land Development Plan; Final Plan Application

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Hope Rescue Mission) is seeking to subdivide a 4.88 acre property located at 645 North 6th Street that will include a Men's Residence and Office (Lot 1) and a Women and Children Center (Lot 2). The Final Plan was previously approved by the Planning Commission on February 22, 2022. The Applicant has made modifications to the plan that will require approval by the Planning Commission.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on April 13, 2022. The Plan was also previously reviewed by other departments and agencies.
- (c) Discussion: The Applicant has added a driveway along Greenwich Street. The proposed driveway, sidewalks and curbs shall be evaluated by the Public Works Department. A Municipal Improvements Agreement and a Stormwater Management Maintenance Agreement shall be required for this project.
- (d) Action: Commissioner DeLeon made a motion to reaffirm approval of the Final Plan Application, subject to the Applicant resolving all comments referenced within the review letter issued by Hawk Valley Associates on April 12, 2022 as well as resolving all required site improvements with the Public Works Department. Commissioner Olsen seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(7) Medical Arts Annexation Plan: Preliminary/Final Plan Application

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Fifth Street Holdings, LLC) has submitted a Preliminary/Final Plan Application to consolidate two (2) parcels of land via annexation, which are located at 226 and 230 North 5th Street. This development was previously submitted as part of a Land Development Plan, which shall be considered as a separate application or phase.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on April 12, 2022. The Berks County Planning Commission shall be required to review this plan.
- (c) Discussion: The Planning Commission members were advised that the Applicant will seek approval for the annexation portion of the project and submit the land development plan once the building code issues are resolved.
- (d) Action: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to table action on the plan until the Berks County Planning Commission has issued their review. Commissioner DeLeon seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(8) MJ Reider Annexation and Land Development Plan: Preliminary/Final Plan Application

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Barbara Coyle) in conjunction with the Tenant (MJ Reider Associates) submitted a Preliminary/Final Plan Application to consolidate two (2) parcels of land via annexation as well as a building addition and related site improvements, which are located at 103 and 107 Angelica Street.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on April 18, 2022. The Plan was also previously reviewed by other departments and agencies.
- (c) Discussion: The Planning Commission members were advised that the project shall require modifications to the driveway, curb and sidewalk along this segment of Angelica Street.

- (d) Action on the Plan: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to approve the Preliminary/Final Plan Application for the MJ Reider Annexation and Land Development Plan, subject to the Applicant resolving all issues referenced within the Hawk Valley Associates review letter issued on April 18, 2022. Commissioner Rye seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).
- (e) Action on Site Improvements: Commissioner DeLeon made a motion to authorize the Planning Commission Chairman to execute the improvements agreement and/or stormwater maintenance agreement that may be required for this project. Commissioner Olsen seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0)

(9) Alvernia Berkshire Building Land Development Plan: Preliminary/Final Plan Application

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Berkshire II Real Estate Holdings, LLC) has submitted a Preliminary/Final Plan Application to redevelop and apply adaptive reuse provisions for an existing building and property located at 101 North 5th Street and 501 Washington Street. The project will include commercial use(s) on the first floor and 79 residential apartments for 145 foreign exchange student attending Alvernia University on the upper floors.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on April 15, 2022. The Plan was also previously reviewed by other departments and agencies.
- (c) Discussion: The Planning Commission members were advised that the Applicant has obtained zoning relief from the Zoning Hearing Board via ZHB Appeal 2022-13, which pertains to the increase in residential apartment units and students. The Applicant will need to resolve the sewage facility planning requirements with the departments and agencies with jurisdiction.
- (d) Action on the Plan: Commissioner Rye made a motion to approve the Preliminary/Final Plan Application for the Alvernia Berkshire Building Land Development Plan, subject to the Applicant resolving all issues referenced within the Hawk Valley Associates review letter issued on April 15, 2022. Commissioner Cinfici seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).
- (e) Action on Site Improvements: Commissioner Rye made a motion to authorize the Planning Commission Chairman to execute the improvements agreement that may be required for this project. Commissioner DeLeon seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(10) Reading Station Building D Subdivision Plan: Preliminary/Final Plan Application

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Douglass Development) submitted a Preliminary/Final Plan Application to subdivide Reading Station Building D, which is located at 600 Spring Street. Building D will be redeveloped and occupied by a self-storage use (CubeSmart).
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on April 15, 2022. The Plan was also previously reviewed by other departments and agencies.
- (c) Discussion: The Planning Commission members were advised that the Applicant has obtained zoning relief from the Zoning Hearing Board via ZHB Appeal 2022-12, which pertains to dimensional requirements for permitted uses within the M-C Zoning District.
- (d) Action on the Plan: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to approve the Preliminary/Final Plan Application for the Reading Station Building D Subdivision Plan, subject to the Applicant resolving all issues referenced within the Hawk Valley Associates review letter issued on April 15, 2022. Commissioner DeLeon seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

- (e) Action on Site Improvements: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to authorize the Planning Commission Chairman to execute the improvements agreement and stormwater management maintenance agreement that may be required for this project. Commissioner Cinfici seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(11) Scott Street Subdivision Plan: Preliminary/Final Plan Application

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Robert Bilman) submitted a Preliminary/Final Plan Application to subdivide two (2) existing lots into four (4) lots, which are located at 1325 and 1341 Scott Street. The lots will be developed and occupied by four (4) residential dwellings. The plan was previously approved by the Planning Commission on February 22, 2022.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on April 20, 2022. The Plan was also previously reviewed by other departments and agencies.
- (c) Discussion: The Planning Commission members were advised that the Applicant has revised the plan to resolve all previous comments.
- (d) Action on the Plan: Commissioner DeLeon made a motion to approve the Preliminary/Final Plan Application for the Scott Street Subdivision, subject to the Applicant resolving all comments referenced in the Hawk Valley Associates review letter issued on April 20, 2022. Commissioner Cinfici seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).
- (e) Action on Site Improvements: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to authorize the Planning Commission Chairman to execute the improvements agreement and stormwater management maintenance agreement that may be required for this project. Commissioner Cinfici seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(12) Bern Street Car Wash Subdivision and Land Development Plan: Preliminary Plan Application

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Andrew Roland) has submitted a Preliminary Subdivision and Land Development Plan for review and consideration. Lot 1 of the development is a proposed car wash at 1725 North 5th Street, which is located on the east side of North 5th Street and south side of Bern Street.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on April 22, 2022. The Plan was also submitted for review by other departments and agencies.
- (c) Discussion: The Planning Commission raised several concerns with: land use compatibility; zoning compliance; traffic control; site accessibility; common driveways; off-street parking and loading; stormwater management; emergency response; utility services; curbs and sidewalks; billboards and signs; and other related issues. A meeting shall be scheduled to review technical issues with staff.
- (d) Action: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to table action on the plan. Commissioner DeLeon seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(13) Bern Street Storage Subdivision and Land Development Plan: Preliminary Plan Application

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Andrew Roland) has submitted a Preliminary Subdivision and Land Development Plan for review and consideration. Lot 2 of the development is a proposed storage facility at 1704 North 6th Street, which is located on the west side of North 6th Street and south side of Bern Street.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on April 22, 2022. The Plan was also submitted for review by other departments and agencies.
- (c) Discussion: The Planning Commission raised several concerns with: land use compatibility; zoning compliance; traffic control; site accessibility; common driveways; off-street parking

and loading; stormwater management; utility services; curbs and sidewalks; billboards; and other related issues. A meeting shall be scheduled to review technical issues with staff.

- (d) Action: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to table action on the plan. Commissioner DeLeon seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(14) Auto Repair Center (600 S. 9th St.) Land Development Plan: Preliminary/Final Plan Application

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Thieu Mai) has submitted a Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan for review and consideration. The development is a redevelopment project that will include an automobile repair facility located within the middle section of an existing building located at 600 South 9th Street.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on April 23, 2022. The Plan was also submitted for review by other departments and agencies.
- (c) Discussion: The Planning Commission raised several concerns with: land use compatibility; zoning compliance (flex space); site accessibility; extended driveway aprons; off-street parking and loading; utility services; curbs and sidewalks; and other related issues.
- (d) Action: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to table action on the plan. Commissioner Cinfici seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(15) Municipal Ordinances

- (a) SALDO Amendments: Hawk Valley Associates has prepared and issued a revised final draft of the amendments to Sections 515-312(B) and 515-312(D) as well as supporting definitions for the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. The revised final draft has been submitted to the Berks County Planning Commission for review and comment.
- (b) Zoning Map Revision: City Council has scheduled a public hearing on April 27, 2022 in order to consider revising the zoning designation of a 1.32 acre parcel of land located along the west side of North 12th Street and south side of Bern Street (TPID 17531722195818) from the M-C to R-3 Zoning District. The Planning Commission has recommended this revision.

(16) Planning Commission Annual Report for 2021

- (a) Final Draft: Hawk Valley Associates has prepared and issued a final draft of the Planning Commission Annual Report for 2021. This report is required pursuant to the provisions specified by Section 207 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Codes.
- (b) Discussion: The Annual Report includes a summary of: the 18 plans approved by the Planning Commission; the status of 20 pending plans; the municipal ordinances and reports issued; and other projects and activities coordinated by the Planning Commission.
- (c) Action: Commissioner Cinfici made a motion to accept the Planning Commission Annual Report for 2021 and submit it to City Council. Commissioner Olsen seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(17) Old Business, Waiver Requests, Project Updates and Pending Plans

The following project updates were provided by Hawk Valley Associates:

- (a) Albright Exeter Hall Land Development Plan: The Final Plan was approved by the Planning Commission on January 25, 2022, subject to conditions. The Municipal Improvements Agreement and Stormwater Management Agreement were executed. All other conditions have been resolved. The Final Plan was endorsed by the Planning Commission and recorded with the Berks County Recorder of Deeds.

- (b) Dream Ventures (100 South 4th Street) Land Development Plan: The Final Plan was approved by the Planning Commission on March 22, 2022, subject to conditions. The Final Plan needs to be endorsed and recorded by June 20, 2022.
- (c) Habitat for Humanity Subdivision and Land Development Plan: The approval of the Final Plan was reaffirmed by the Planning Commission on February 22, 2022. The Municipal Improvements Agreement and the Stormwater Management Agreement have been endorsed. The Final Plan was endorsed by the Planning Commission and recorded by the Berks County Recorder of Deeds.
- (d) Iron Gate Land Development Plan Application: The Applicant will need to consider the recommendations that have been provided by the staff and consultants representing the City of Reading. A time extension was granted by the Applicant through July 30, 2022. Commissioner Olsen made a motion to accept the time extension. Commissioner Rye seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).
- (e) Medical Arts Land Development Plan: The Planning Commission has determined that code compliance issues will need to be addressed in order to consider the proposed building addition for this redevelopment and adaptive reuse project. A time extension was granted by the Applicant through August 31, 2022. Commissioner Olsen made a motion to accept the time extension. Commissioner Rye seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).
- (f) O'Neil Storage Land Development Plan: The Preliminary Plan Application was approved by the Planning Commission on January 25, 2022. A Final Plan Application shall be required.
- (g) Overlord Realty (916 N. 9th Street) Land Development Plan: The Final Plan Application was approved by the Planning Commission on March 22, 2022. The Final Plan should be endorsed and recorded by June 20, 2022.
- (h) Remcon Plastics Land Development Plan: The approval of the Final Plan was reaffirmed by the Planning Commission on February 22, 2022. The Municipal Improvements Agreement and Stormwater Management Agreement were endorsed. The Final Plan should be endorsed by the Planning Commission and recorded by the Berks County Recorder of Deeds by May 25, 2022.
- (i) Salando Banquet Hall (CU Application 2022-01): City Council has scheduled a public hearing on April 27, 2022. The Planning Commission has provided recommendations.
- (j) Scheidner Annexation Plan: The Preliminary/Final Plan was approved by the Planning Commission on March 22, 2022. The Applicant will need to resolve all conditions of approval and record the plan by June 20, 2022.
- (k) Super Natural Foods Land Development Plan: The Final Plan Application was approved by the Planning Commission on March 22, 2022. The Applicant will need to resolve all conditions of approval and record the plan by June 20, 2022.
- (l) Villa Independent Cottages Land Development Plan: The Preliminary Plan should be revised and resubmitted for further review and consideration by June 20, 2022.

(18) Announcements and Other Business

- (a) MPC Review Session: The Planning Commission was provided with an educational program on the provisions specified by the PA Municipalities Planning Code on April 25, 2022.
- (b) Greenhouse Building: A Committee Meeting was held in order to discuss plans and recommendations for the City of Reading Greenhouse Building. The next meeting is scheduled on May 25, 2022.

- (c) ZHB Applications: The Planning Commission was advised of the pending applications that will be considered by the Zoning Hearing Board. The notifications have been provided to the Planning Commission for background information on future planning applications.
- (d) FTP Site: The Planning and Zoning Offices are coordinating efforts to include all pending plans and application on the FTP site.
- (e) Planning Commission Bylaws: The Planning Commission will review work that was done over the past few years that pertain to the Bylaws of the Planning Commission. The Bylaws should accurately reflect: the number of Planning Commission members; the term limits of the officers (Chairman and Vice-Chairman); the duties of the Planning Commission; and other provisions that need to reflect current policies.
- (f) Climate Action Plan: Bethany Ayers Fisher from the Public Works Department provided an update on the Climate Action Plan. This project has been a continuous effort since 2019. The proposed plan provides emphasis on sustainability.
- (g) Future Plans: The Planning Commission has voiced a desire to be actively involved with planning efforts within the City of Reading. The Comprehensive Plan needs to be updated and the Planning Commission is prepared to undertake this challenge and lead this effort. Hawk Valley Associates will coordinate efforts with the Department of Community Development Services and the Planning Commission. This should be a high priority.

(19) Approval of Planning Commission Meeting Minutes:

- (a) PC Meeting Minutes from March 22, 2022: Commissioner Cinfici made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from March 22, 2022. Seconded by Commissioner Olsen. The motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(20) Election of Planning Commission Officers

- (a) Chairman: The Planning Commission nominated Commission Bealer to be the Chairman of the Planning Commission from May 2022 through April 2023. No other nominations were offered. The Planning Commission unanimously approved (5-0) Commissioner Bealer as the Planning Commission Chairman.
- (b) Vice-Chairman: The Planning Commission nominated Commissioner Cinfici to be the Vice-Chairman of the Planning Commission from May 2022 through April 2023. No other nominations were offered. The Planning Commission unanimously approved (5-0) Commissioner Cinfici as the Planning Commission Vice-Chairman.

(21) Next Planning Commission Meetings:

- (a) PC Meetings: The Planning Commission determined that future meetings shall remain as a hybrid approach that provides the option for attendance in person and via a zoom or telephone link.
- (b) Next Regular Planning Commission Meeting: Tuesday, May 24, 2022 at 6:00 pm.

(22) Adjournment: Commissioner Rye made a motion to adjourn the Planning Commission Meeting. Commissioner Olsen seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved by the Planning Commission (5-0). The Planning Commission Meeting concluded at 8:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jerome Skrincosky, Planning and Zoning Consultant