

**MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF THE
READING REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF
READING HELD ON 20th JULY 2016**

The Redevelopment Authority of the City of Reading held the regular Monthly Meeting at 815 Washington Street, Room 2-53 in the City of Reading, County of Berks, and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, on 20th day of July, 2016.

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Mr. Heinly, Chairman and on roll call, the following were present:

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| Mr. Chris Heinly | Chairman |
| Mr. Dan Luckey | Vice-Chairman |
| Mr. James Radwanski | Member |

Also present were:

Mr. Adam Mukerji, Executive Director
Mr. Dennis Witwer, Executive Assistant
Mr. Keith Money, Barley, Snyder
Mr. Alex Palacios, Community Development Director
Ms. Patricia Vasquez, Community Development
Mr. Thomas Coleman, City Solicitor

Upon roll call, Mr. Witwer declared a quorum.

The Minutes of the last meeting were reviewed as well as the Finance reports and were both approved unanimously.

City of Reading art project competition

Mr. Palacios and Ms. Vasquez of the Community Development department appeared before the board to discuss an art competition that the city held using funds from a N.E.A. grant.

Ms. Vasquez provided the board with images of what the artwork will look like. She stated that an RFP was created and 30 artists submitted their work for consideration. The board was asked to consider allowing the outdoor artwork to be placed on land owned by the RRA located in the 600 block of Penn Street, situated on the parking lot known as the "State Lot".

Mr. Mukerji asked if the artists were local, to which Ms. Vasquez stated that they were not. She explained that because the funding was federal dollars, they competition had to be open nationwide.

Mr. Mukerji asked if Ms. Vasquez knew if any of the artist from GoogleWorks submitted any plans. She stated that she was not certain as she was brought on to the project later in the process.

Mr. Heinly stated that he liked the idea, but was concerned about vandalism. He asked who would be responsible for any damage to the art sculptures. Mr. Palacios stated that the city would be completely responsible for the sculptures. He assured the board that the RRA would not be financially responsible for any part of the project.

Mr. Luckey made a motion allowing Mr. Mukerji to execute an agreement with the City for the art sculpture to be located on the property located at 644 Penn Street, also known as the "State Lot". Mr. Radwanski seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Angelica Park grant violation from 1965

Mr. Thomas Coleman, the City's acting Solicitor, brought to the attention of the board an issue the City is facing regarding a DCNR federal grant that was awarded the city in 1965 for Angelica Lake Park. The issue; the city forgot about the restrictions of the grants - they were not attached to the deed and as such leased part of the land to Alvernia University, which built ballfields there, mostly for its students, and leased another part to Berks Nature, where it runs an environmental education center and plans to build its headquarters. But both these parcels are west of Morgantown Road.

Mr. Coleman stated the city built the fire-training site on 10 acres of the parcel east of Morgantown Road; that site was transferred to county ownership in 2012.

Another 12 acres of the eastern parcel were merged with adjacent land for the city sewage treatment plant.

Adding buildings, giving up control of the land through leases, limiting public access or converting any portion of the land to non-outdoor recreation use is not acceptable.

The City is expected to replace all land where the restrictions were violated with other land of equal appraised value and equal public outdoor recreational value. It was made clear that it must be replaced by dollar amount, not land amount.

Mr. Coleman asked the board if the RRA had any land that could be used as part of the replacement.

The board stated that it did not and brainstormed as to how the city could fix the predicament they found themselves in. It was suggested to determine how much land might be available on Neversink Mountain. It was also discussed how to go about disputing the appraisal of Angelic Lake, which DCNR is using, which values the 92 acres at \$764,000.

RRA Property Updates

Mr. Mukerji asked the board to consider renewing their brokerage contract with Re/Max of Reading for the sale of the Riverview Industrial Park. He stated that he has been in talks with a food supplying company which could be quite promising and would bring many new jobs to the city.

Mr. Radwanski made a motion to allow Mr. Mukerji to sign a renewal contract with Re/Max of Reading for an additional 6 months. Mr. Luckey seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Mr. Mukerji advised the board that Mayor Scott is looking to get ownership of the US Post office on N. 5th Street. The Mayor is interested in putting a Police substation in at the location. He stated that there was a bid process for the building which started at \$1.3 million.

Mr. Mukerji went on to discuss the challenges this building has when it comes to renovations. There are many deed restrictions and since the building is considered historical, modifications are limited.

The Mayor had asked Mr. Mukerji and the RRA to work on behalf of the City to obtain the property. Because the RRA has specific powers granted them by the Redevelopment Act of 1945, that the City does not have the RRA can more easily purchase the property.

Messer's Mukerji and Witwer asked the board to ratify a motion allowing the lease of spaces on a parking lot located at Lemon and Chestnut streets to residents of the neighborhood. The lot is part of the Penn Optical property and for years the neighbors have been asking to lease spots. In June RRA staff asked Mr. Mooney to draft leases which could be used to

lease the spaces for \$30 a month. Mr. Witwer explained that new lines had been painted on the lot and 7 spots had been created and leased within a week.

The board thought this was a good idea, as it would help keep the lot from being trashed. Mr. Radwanski made a motion allowing the lease of parking spots on the Lemon and Chestnut parking lot for \$30 a month. Mr. Luckey seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Executive Session

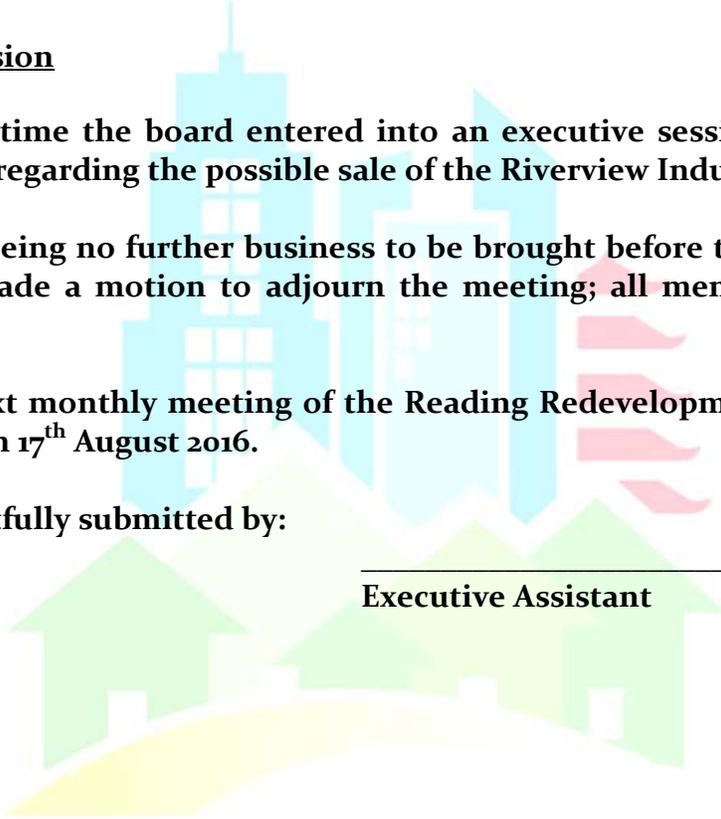
At this time the board entered into an executive session to discuss legal matters regarding the possible sale of the Riverview Industrial Park.

There being no further business to be brought before the board, Mr. Radwanski made a motion to adjourn the meeting; all members were in favor.

The next monthly meeting of the Reading Redevelopment Authority will be held on 17th August 2016.

Respectfully submitted by:

Executive Assistant



READING
Redevelopment Authority