

**MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF THE
READING REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF
READING HELD ON 17th MAY 2017**

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 17th day of May, 2017.

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

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
Mrs. Shelly Fizz, Bookbindery Apts

Upon roll call, Mr. Witwer declared a quorum.

The Finance reports were approved unanimously.

Parcel 32 –Ratification

Mr. Mukerji asked the board to ratify the agreement to sell the land to a company for the use of a medical marijuana dispensary. The sale is contingent upon getting a license from the State of Pennsylvania. Barley Snyder has \$10,000 in escrow for expenses related to the sale of the property.

The board voted unanimously to approve the agreement of sale.

Reading Skate Park

Mr. Mukerji introduced a new skate park project which is slated to be built on the RRA land down by the river, property address 202 Water Street.

He stated that the RRA will team up with Berks Skateboarding Association, which has already started raising money for the project. The park will be a free, multi-use concrete skate park.

Mr. Mukerji stated that he will be looking for funding from DCNR and other sources while, Mr. Witwer stated that the Tony Hawk Foundation is another source of funding that the association will be working with.

The goal for the project is to have it become a major tourist attraction, much like the skate parks in Bethlehem and York County. The administration is very much in favor of the project and has asked that the skate park design include bike usage.

Bookbindery Apartments

Mr. Mukerji introduced Mrs. Shelly Fizz to the board. She has been working as the new consultant and property manager for the Bookbindery Apartments since the departure of Mr. Lee.

Mrs. Fizz gave the board a brief background of her history with the City of Reading and OCR. Mrs. Fizz was the housing rehab specialist while working with Mr. Mukerji in the Community Development Office. She also gave a report of the improvements that she has made to the building in the short amount of time that she's been working. She has been receiving positive feedback from the tenants and also from the housing inspectors, City's codes department and section 8.

Mrs. Fizz also advised the board that the roof is in dire need of replacement. The board asked if the roof could be repaired. The answer from both Mrs. Fizz and Mr. Mukerji was no, it is too far gone for simple repairs. After the hail storm in 2015 and the general age of the roof, it would be in the RRA's best interest to replace the roof. Mr. Radwanski asked to get estimates. In the meantime, Mr. Radwanski made a motion authorizing Mr. Mukerji and Ms. Fizz to apply for HOME funds from the City to be used for the replacement of the roof. Mr. Mukerji stated that Mr. Witwer will also work on the application. Mr. Luckey seconded the motion and all members were in favor.

Greening of Penn St.

Mr. Mukerji gave a brief update on the Greening of Penn St. project which is being conducted by Flora-Teeter. He explained that this project is being funded by a \$75,000 EPA grant. The study that was on exhibit for the public, showed a connection from the Schuylkill River to the downtown

district which would also include bike lanes. This connection is also part of the “Complete Streets Plan”. This would also connect the 18th ward to the trail system.

Buttonwood Gateway Housing

Mr. Mukerji told the board that he is working on a housing development project down by Buttonwood Gateway. He reminded the board that a housing development in this neighborhood was the original plan for this area 15 years ago when the RRA first acquired the land. He stated that this will be a joint project which will include the County redevelopment authority and OCR, both of whom own properties in the area.

Mr. Mukerji stated that the Mayor is very interested in doing a development that is very similar to the new housing development on Weiser Street, which was constructed by Delaware Valley Development Corp.

Mr. Luckey stated that he cannot support a low income housing development in the city. He stated that the City has enough low incoming housing and that he would rather it be elderly housing, which would help reduce the burden on the city, school district and police.

Mr. Radwanski stated that Mr. Mukerji should negotiate a deal with the city to swap the properties for the liens against the Bookbindery Apartments. It would be a win win for both parties involved.

Lastly, Mr. Mukerji stated that Habitat for Humanity is also interested in doing a housing development on the same land and has offered \$50,000 for the lands owned by RRA. Mr. Radwanski stated that he would rather see the city do the project as it had done with the Weiser Street development.

Naval Marine Center

Mr. Mukerji advised the board that the lease agreement with L.F. Driscoll had ended. He stated that he would like to market the property for the highest and best use which would be a housing project. The board stated that they would agree to a “market rate” housing development. It is prime location as the State Police headquarters is across the street.

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. Luckey 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 21st June 2017.

Respectfully submitted by:

Executive Assistant

17th May 2017