

**Reading LRA**  
**Thursday, February 25, 2010**  
**Tele-conference Call**  
**City Council Office**  
**6:00 p.m.**

**LRA Members Attending:** V. Spencer, S. Marmarou, F. Acosta, J. Knockstead, M. Ballas, E. Raphaelli

**Others Attending:** E. Swiger, B. Steinberg, L. Kelleher

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Mr. Swiger stated that due to schedules he and Mr. Steinberg were unable to be in Reading for the meeting and arranged to participate via conference call. The conference call opportunity was extended to the LRA members and others also to provide ample opportunity for participation.

Mr. Swiger explained that the purpose of this meeting is to obtain comment from the LRA members on the draft reuse plan distributed last week. He stated that the draft needs to be posted for public review by tomorrow. However, he noted that the appendices and exhibits will make the document too large to send electronically, so the notated draft plan by itself will be distributed for posting. The appendices and exhibits will be sent on a disc so they can be uploaded and printed. Ms. Kelleher stated that the document will be posted on the City's website and copies will also be sent to the Reading Public Library (Main and Branches).

Mr. Marmarou inquired when the next meeting with the public would be. Mr. Swiger stated that the meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 11<sup>th</sup> at the Villa St. Elizabeth at 7 p.m. Ms. Kelleher stated that the required legal notice was published and that notification flyers will be mailed to approximately 1000 residents in the affected community next week. She said she also arranged for a stenographer to attend the hearing and prepare a transcript.

Mr. Swiger stated that OEA Project Manager Garry Gontz provided a document outlining the issues that the Reuse Plan needs to cover and pitfalls to avoid. He stated that this document is very helpful and thanked Mr. Gontz for sending it.

Mr. Swiger stated that after the public hearing, the plan can be revised to reflect issues brought forward at the hearing. The LRA will need to meet to adopt the finalized plan

on March 17<sup>th</sup>. The plan will then need City Council's approval at their regular meeting scheduled for March 22<sup>nd</sup> before it is submitted for HUD and OEA review on March 31<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Swiger expressed the belief that the entire project has worked out well and noted the value of the partnership between the Reading Hospital and Mary's Shelter, which is bolstered by community support. Mr. Steinberg voiced his agreement.

Mr. Swiger noted the need for the Reading Hospital and Mary's Shelter to draft a formal Legally Binding Agreement. Mr. Steinberg noted that the Reading Hospital would like to subdivide the site and transfer ownership of the Mary's Shelter portion directly to Mary's Shelter. He stated that this may be problematic. Ms. Kelleher stated that she will contact the OEA and Navy to inquire about this tomorrow. She also suggested that Mr. Steinberg contact the legal counsel for the Reading Hospital (John Roland, Esq.) and Mary's Shelter (Scott Rodes, Esq.) to discuss the need for a formally executed Legally Binding Agreement.

Ms. Ballas noted that any subdivision must be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission. She inquired how the Planning Commission would perceive such a request. Mr. Raphaelli stated that he does not believe it would be a problem from the Planning Commission's perspective.

Ms. Kelleher reported that the Navy Real Estate Specialist Elaine Preston noted the need for the Reading Hospital to submit a public conveyance application through the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The HHS will need to sponsor the proposed use of the site. Mr. Mable has started this process.

Mr. Knockstead, as a member of the Berks Homeless Coalition, noted that this project is not on the Homeless Coalition's radar. Ms. Kelleher stated that representatives from the Homeless Coalition attended some of the meetings held by the County, before they withdrew from the BRAC Process. Mr. Knockstead asked Ms. Kelleher to contact the Executive Director Sharon Parker to update her and invite her to the March 11<sup>th</sup> Public Hearing.

Mr. Raphaelli inquired if the LRA members were aware of BWIC's application for the site at the 3<sup>rd</sup> and Chestnut area. Mr. Spencer and Ms. Kelleher stated that they became aware of this during the summer of 2009. Mr. Spencer provided highlights about BWIC's application to the Zoning Hearing Board and Mr. Raphaelli described their application to the Planning Commission.

All LRA members on the conference call voiced their support of the draft reuse plan.  
The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:35 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by City Clerk Linda A. Kelleher*