

**Reading LRA
Public Meeting
Thursday, April 30, 2009
Council Chambers
5:30 p.m.
Meeting Report**

Committee Members Attending: S. Marmarou, S. Fuhs, J. Knockstead, M. Ballas

Staff attending: L. Kelleher, Point of Contact; E. Swiger, Swiger Consulting, Inc., B. Steinberg, Kutack Rock

Others Attending: F. Vecchio & T. Chapman - Reading School District, C. Folk - Mary's Shelter; K. Wrobel Reading Hospital; Citizen

Steve Fuhs, Vice-Chair, called the Reading Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) to order at 5:30 p.m. He announced that the LRA will be recessing and going into an Executive Session to discuss contractual issues with legal counsel. The LRA reconvened at 6:30 p.m. Mr. Spencer attended the Executive Session, but needed to be excused due to a conflicting appointment.

Building Inspection Report

Mr. Swiger stated that the Building Inspector's report has been received and posted on the LRA webpage. He stated that the building is in good structural condition; however, a number of deficiencies were identified. He noted that this report does not consider compliance with the City's property maintenance, trades and fire codes. He noted that the basement of the building may have originally been a Cold War era bomb shelter.

Mr. Steinberg noted that the environmental concerns identified are untested. The CERFA report (located on the LRA webpage) identifies asbestos, lead and radon contamination; however, the levels of contamination are unknown. Mr. Swiger stated that Ms. Kelleher inquired about OEA or DoD funding for environmental testing; however, that request was denied. Mr. Swiger added that he has asked Mr. Pugliese, from Congressman Gerlach's office, to inquire about funding for environmental testing. Ms. Kelleher noted that the federal government has generally not provided funding for environmental testing or remediation at BRAC properties. BRAC properties are transferred "Where Is, As Is". Mr. Swiger agreed noting that the organization who receives the property must consider the costs to remediate environmental contamination and the costs to make the property comply with residential codes prior

to occupation. He added that if the party receiving the property fails to use the property as stated in their proposal, the property will revert to the federal government.

Second Public Meeting

The Reading LRA must schedule a second public meeting with the affected community to allow residents to comment on the draft reuse plan. The plan must be made available for public review 7-10 days before the meeting. The final reuse plan needs to contain public comment about the proposed use of the property. After some discussion and consultation with those who submitted NOIs, the group selected Tuesday, June 2 at 7 p.m. Ms. Kelleher was asked to reserve the meeting room at the 7th Day Adventists church on Kenhorst Boulevard. Mr. Swiger suggested that the three organizations who submitted NOIs attend this second public meeting and be prepared to make a ten minute presentation on their proposed use to the public.

NOTE: During conversations between Mr. Swiger, Mr. Steinberg and Ms. Kelleher the need to delay the Public Meeting until Wednesday June 10th at 7 p.m. was identified

Other Business

Mr. Swiger, in response to a question from Doctor Chapman, stated that he, Mr. Steinberg and Ms. Kelleher met with BWIC and Mary's Shelter representatives along with Mr. Pugliese from Congressman Gerlach's Office. He stated that BWIC and Mary's Shelter requested a meeting as they were not included in the meetings that were conducted by Mr. Flynn during his study of the City's economic development issues. Mr. Swiger reported that the meeting was general in nature.

A community resident inquired if the NOIs are available for public review. Mr. Swiger stated that the NOIs are located on the LRA webpage. Ms. Kelleher stated that the LRA webpage is located on the City's website at ReadingPA.gov. She stated that the LRA is listed under the index of City Departments.

As no further business was brought forward, the Reading LRA meeting was adjourned.

*Respectfully submitted by:
Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk
Ernest Swiger, Swiger Consulting Group*