

**Reading Local Redevelopment Authority**  
**Penn Room**  
**Friday, August 8, 2008**

**Committee Members Attending:** V. Spencer, S. Marmarou, S. Fuhs, P. Coles, E. Rafaelli, J. Knockstead, B. Dennis (ad hoc member)

**Staff attending:** L. Kelleher, Point of Contact; G. Gontz, Project Manager

**Others Attending:** Berks Women in Crisis, Mary's Shelter, Reading School District

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Vaughn D. Spencer, Chair, called the Reading Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) meeting to order at 11:05 a.m. After introductions of everyone present, he asked Mr. Gontz, Project Manager from the Department of Defense, to explain the background and purpose of this process and the steps the Reading LRA must take to complete the process.

Mr. Gontz explained that the Navy Marine Center, located on Kenhorst Blvd, was decommissioned by the Department of Defense (DoD). As the County Commissioners were interested in using the property they applied to undertake the LRA process. After their approval by the DoD, they formed a committee and began undertaking the process defined by the DoD. The County LRA advertised to provide interested parties with the ability to submit Notices of Intent (NOI) – applications to reuse the property. They also conducted a tour of the property. They accepted Notices of Intent (NOIs) and held a workshop to allow those applying to explain their proposal to the Committee. After the election and the change in Commissioners, they decided to discontinue the County LRA. The City, after consideration, decided to apply to take over. Under Federal regulations the City LRA can pick up where the County LRA stopped.

Mr. Spencer stated that the City (Ms. Kelleher for the Council President, the Mayor and Managing Director) participated on the County LRA.

Mr. Gontz stated the City, after being approved by the DoD, applied for a grant to hire a consultant to assist the City LRA with the final steps in the process, culminating with the formal submission of the reuse plan to the DoD and HUD.

The application for \$95,000 was approved in July. He noted that this was one of the highest grants approved.

Ms. Kelleher reported that an RFP to find the consultant was prepared and advertised by the City's Purchasing Office. She explained that Senator Casey's Office helped connect her with other LRAs in Pennsylvania. Through those contacts she learned about the Association of Defense Communities (ADC) and was able to find engineering firms that have experience in undertaking these projects. She stated that she applied for membership for the Reading LRA.

Ms. Kelleher stated that RFPs were sent out to approximately 10 of these firms located on the ADC website. Responses are expected at the beginning of September. One of the firms requested that the Reading LRA consider providing opportunity for a tour. BWIC and Mary's Shelter also expressed interest in a tour of the property. They requested at least a few weeks notice.

Ms. Kelleher stated that in addition to the NOIs submitted by Berks Women In Crisis (BWIC) and Mary's Shelter, an NOI was also submitted by the Reading School District. She reported that she also has a call from a realtor expressing interest in the property.

In response to a question from BWIC, Mr. Gontz and Mr. Dennis explained that the City LRA has the ability to accept new NOIs without further advertisement as the County already completed that step. They also said that as the County LRA already held a workshop on the NOIs the Reading LRA could choose not to undertake that step. They again explained that under federal regulations the City is taking over for the County LRA, not starting over.

Mr. Gontz explained the timeline that governs the LRA process. He stated that the Reading LRA must conclude their work around April 2009. Ms. Kelleher explained that Mr. Dennis, County Administrator, served on the County LRA and also went through this process with in a prior position.

After discussion, the Reading LRA decided to offer a tour of the property to those submitting responses to the consultant RFP and to those submitting NOIs. Mr. Gontz offered to make the necessary arrangements with the Navy. Ms. Kelleher noted the need to adjust the submission date for the consultants. The Reading LRA provided some target dates for the tour. Mr. Gontz suggested setting a deadline for the submissions of the NOIs. After discussion the Reading LRA decided to set the deadline for the submission of NOIs and the responses to

the RFP at September 17, 2008.

Mr. Gontz noted the good educational materials in the packet provided. He also offered to provide some other materials to assist the group. Ms. Kelleher suggested building a LRA page on the City's website. Educational materials, agendas, minutes, NOIs etc. can be posted and reduce the need for reproducing materials. The group agreed.

Mr. Knockstead inquired if the meetings are public meetings. Mr. Gontz stated that the meetings are open to the public.

The group will meet again after the RFP opening. At the next meeting the group will review the RFPs submitted by those applying for the Consultant position.

*Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher, City Clerk*