

Minutes
Regular meeting of the City of Reading Planning Commission
April 24, 2012 at 7:00 pm

Members present:

Ermete J. Raffaelli, Chairman
Brian J. Burket, Vice Chairman
Michael E. Lauter, Secretary
Wayne Jonas Bealer, Assistant Secretary

Staff present:

Andrew W. Miller, Planning Office
Charles M. Jones, Department of Public Works
Frederick T. Lachat III, Department of Law

Others present:

Justin W. Brewer, Ludgate Engineering Corporation
Ryan K. Gehris
John W. Hoffert, John W. Hoffert PLS Ltd.
Christine M. Folk, Mary's Shelter
John J. Miravich, Fox Rothschild LLP
David A. Kostival, Reading Eagle Company

Chairman Raffaelli called the April meeting to order. Mr. Lauter moved to accept the April 24th agenda. Mr. Burket seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to accept the April agenda.

Subdivision and Land Development:

Gehris Self Storage – final land development plan [0:00.44]

Mr. Brewer mentioned the latest Planning Office review, and reported that the Conservation District had since issued its ‘adequacy’ letter. He said the other comments would be addressed, including the location of the curb-side tree pits. Mr. Miller commented on the plan’s progress, and thanked the applicant for the cooperation. He asked about the role of a limited-liability company referenced in the zoning documentation. Mr. Gehris said the land is currently in his name and his wife’s, and covered by their homeowner’s insurance, but intended to change that once they begin construction, hopefully in June. Mr. Bealer felt the project would improve that block of McKnight Street. Mr. Miller said his only suggested conditions on an approval were the recording-oriented requirements.

Mr. Bealer moved to approve the final plan for “Gehris Self Storage”, conditioned on the fulfillment of the remaining issues communicated in the Planning Office review. Mr. Lauter seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to conditionally approve the final land development plan.

Resolution #14-2012

Kenhorst Boulevard Reserve Center Redevelopment Plan – final subdivision plan [0:16.14]

Following a delay waiting for the clock to catch up to the agenda, and the presentation team to assemble, Mr. Hoffert explained the proposed subdivision of approximately seven acres. It will allow Mary’s Shelter to take possession of the military facility at the corner of Kenhorst and Pershing Boulevards, which was recently vacated by a Marine Reserve artillery unit pursuant to the November 2005 Base Realignment and Closure round. He said their use, a women’s emergency shelter, was approved by a conditional-use resolution of City Council. The balance will be purchased by the Reading Redevelopment Authority, and likely marketed for residential redevelopment. He felt that he had already addressed most of the Planning Office review, and offered to discuss that further. Mr. Miller confirmed that his review had been fully addressed. He said the County Planning Commission had since issued their review, which he felt reiterated issues already resolved. Among the changes, Mr. Hoffert mentioned the 1958 vacating of Market and Hess Streets, now referenced in notes on the cover sheet. He offered some photographs of the existing buildings, as well as the landscaping that Mary’s Shelter intends to keep and maintain. Speculation followed on the potential development of the residue tract, vis-à-vis current zoning regulations, though no potential developers had yet been identified.

Mr. Lauter moved to approve the final subdivision plan for the “Reserve Center Redevelopment”, on the condition that any remaining review items are satisfactorily addressed. Mr. Burket seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to approve the final plan.

Resolution #15-2012

Other business:

§508.3 agreement to extension-9th & Green Streets Apartments (Berks County Redevelopment Authority) [0:28.46]

Mr. Miller reported that this would be a second 90-day review extension. He understood the applicant intended to pick it up again at the May meeting.

Mr. Bealer moved to accept the 90-day extension, as requested in the April 18th letter. Mr. Lauter seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to extend its review of the “9th & Green Streets Apartments” plan by 90 days, per the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code’s time limits (§508.3) for plan review.

Resolution #16-2012

review the draft March 27, 2012 meeting minutes [0:29.30]

Mr. Lauter asked for a clarification, then moved to accept the March meeting minutes. Mr. Burket seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to accept the March 27th meeting minutes.

Resolution #17-2012

The Commission briefly discussed current ‘blighted property’ business, plans expected for the May meeting, and upcoming crosswalk and lighting improvements on Penn Street.

Mr. Lauter moved to adjourn. Mr. Burket seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the April 24th meeting. – 7:42p