

Minutes
Regular meeting of the City of Reading Planning Commission
February 20, 2007 at 7:00 pm

Members present:

Ermete Raffaelli, Chairman
David Reppert, Vice Chairman
Michael Lauter, Secretary
Wayne Jonas Bealer, Assistant Secretary
Frederic dep Rothermel, Jr.
Edmund Palka

Staff present:

Andrew W. Miller, Planning Office
Michelle R. Mayfield, Law Department

Others present:

Julia A. Folmar, G. A. Hutchinson Development Co.
Michael D. Hartman, McCarthy Engineering Associates, PC
Scott M. Henry, Olsen Design Group Architects
Gary L. Mengel, Jr., GL Public Services
Kent D. Morey, Spotts, Stevens & McCoy, Inc.
David A. Wolf, Carpenter Technology Corporation
Kenneth L. Pick, Berks County Community Development Office
Gregg A. Borgia, Borgia Engineering Inc.
Tim Howe, Birchcraft Kitchens, Inc.
Jeffery C. Euclide, Entech Engineering, Inc.
Christopher J. Fell, Interstate Resources, Inc. (d.b.a. United Corrstack, LLC)
David F. Stauffer, United Corrstack, LLC
James J. Brady Jr., Spotts, Stevens & McCoy, Inc.
Timothy J. Krall, Spotts, Stevens & McCoy, Inc.
James D. Smith, Spotts, Stevens & McCoy, Inc.
Scott A. Adams, Gilbert Architects, Inc.
Vern L. McKissick III, McKissick Associates PC
Roger D. Lehmann, All County and Associates, Inc.
Don P. Naughton, DMO Enterprises

The February meeting, originally scheduled for the 13th, was postponed until the 20th, due to weather conditions. Chairman Raffaelli called the February meeting to order, and asked for acceptance of the agenda. Mr. Miller asked that the Commission amend the agenda to allow for an appointment to the City's recently revived Blighted Property Review Committee, and delay review of the "Cotton Street Subdivision" until later in the meeting, because of a scheduling conflict with the presenter.

Mr. Lauter moved to accept the agenda, with the requested changes. Mr. Rothermel seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to approve the amended February agenda.

Subdivision and Land Development:

Review the **final** land development plan for the **GL Public Services Land Development**, a two-story office building proposed at those parcels known as 100-106 North Third Street. [0:02.56]

Mr. Hartman indicated that the proposed garage had been deleted to allow for two additional office spaces on the first floor. Mr. Henry said the building design remained the same otherwise, in appearance and dimensions. He said they opted for the original roofline style proposed, and intend varying shades of gray for the façade coloring.

Mr. Rothermel asked about the intended signage. Mr. Henry said those designs had not been finalized, but recognized the need to seek approval. Mr. Rothermel asked if there were any other issues. Mr. Miller reported some minor plat revisions to be made.

Mr. Rothermel moved to approve GL Public Services' final plan, subject to remaining corrections specified by the Planning Office staff. Mr. Lauter seconded. And the Commission voted 4 to 1 in favor of the final plan, Mr.

Raffaelli casting the dissent.

Resolution #9-2007

Mr. Rothermel asked that, if locations, other than the façade/windows are planned for signage, they apprise the Planning Commission. Mr. Miller reminded of the need for a zoning permit for any and all signage, and asked if they still intended a scrolling marquee. Mr. Henry said not.

Review the **final** land development plan for the **Building 108 Expansion**, an addition proposed at that parcel known as 101 Bern Street (Carpenter Technology Corporation). [0:10.02]

Mr. Morey recalled the action deferred at the January meeting, while awaiting the County Planning Commission and Conservation District reviews. He said those reviews have since been issued, and corrections made per the direction of the Planning Office. He believed the plan to be ready for final approval, and asked the Commission to consider a waiver of the required “bulk and use regulations” table (§22-402.4.L.1). Mr. Miller explained that the reason for the request was the same as the other waivers already granted; the breadth of Carpenter’s overall property and development, and the difficulty in making accurate measurements of coverage.

Mr. Rothermel asked about the input of the Department of Public Works. Mr. Miller said the major engineering concern, as with many of Carpenter’s buildings, is the encroachment over the Bernhart's Creek Conduit, a large underground stormwater structure leading toward the Schuylkill River. He said the City Engineer asked for assurances that the Conduit is protected structurally. He mentioned the standard comments related to sanitary sewer capacity and the pretreatment of industrial discharges. Mr. Morey stated that he was coordinating those issues with the City’s building officials and Utilities Division Manager, respectively. Mr. Rothermel asked if the bilge pumps were still operational. Mr. Wolf said they were last tested in June of 2006, during the heavy rain events.

Mr. Lauter moved to approve the waiver of the required “bulk and use regulations” table (§22-402.4.L.1). Mr. Palka seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to grant the waiver, 5-0. Sections 22-402.4.F, -402.4.H, -402.4.K, -403.1.B had been waived at the January 9th meeting.

Mr. Lauter moved to approve the Building 108 Expansion final plan. Mr. Rothermel seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to approve the final plan, 5-0.

Resolution #10-2007

Mr. Miller asked if the issues surrounding the water line had been resolved with the Water Authority. Mr. Morey said the new location was agreed to, some construction issues still being discussed. He said it would have to be completely resolved before Carpenter could start anything else.

Review the **sketch** land development plan for **Building 143 – Alloyed Storage**, a storage building proposed at that parcel known as 101 Bern Street (Carpenter Technology Corporation). [0:18.28]

Mr. Morey indicated the proximity of the proposed Building 143 to Building 108. He said the original design called for 108 to be expanded north, but because of the Bernhart's Creek Conduit and the flow of production, they opted for an expansion south. This will cause the demolition of a building currently used for storage. Building 143 is the intended replacement. He described the construction as “slab on grade”, there being no overhead cranes, and therefore no need for deeper foundation designs. He expected to have final plans submitted for the Commission’s consideration by the March or April meeting. He mentioned previous meetings with the Fire Marshal and the City’s “One-Stop Shop”. He said no sewer or water connections were planned.

Mr. Rothermel asked about the designed height. Mr. Morey estimated thirty feet maximum. Mr. Wolf described a coated metal cladding. Mr. Rothermel asked if Carpenter ever planned to expand the locker room (Building 25). Mr. Wolf figured that would happen eventually, but not as part of the current expansions. Mr. Rothermel suggested that the colors chosen for Building 143 compliment the existing locker room.

Mr. Miller asked about the City Engineer’s concern about building so close to a 9½-foot corrugated metal storm pipe. Mr. Morey said he intended to address that concern to the City Engineer’s satisfaction. Mr. Wolf said the structural engineer has been made aware of the need to protect it structurally and for maintenance accessibility.

With no further discussion of Building 143, Mr. Morey offered an update on the planning of Building 84, first presented to the Commission in “sketch” form at the November 14th meeting. He said the final plans were submitted to the Planning Office the previous week. He hoped the same waivers granted Building 108 would be approved for Building 84. Mr. Rothermel asked about an overall plan of Carpenter’s property and buildings. Mr. Wolf referred to a plan identifying the buildings, and showing the relationship between them. He offered it with the next presentation.

Blighted Property Review Committee - appointment of Planning Commission representation: [0:31.29]

Mr. Rothermel moved to nominate Mr. Bealer, in absentia. Mr. Lauter seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to support the nomination, 5-0. (see also: mention under “Annual Report”)

Resolution #11-2007

Minutes: [0:33.39]

Mr. Rothermel suggested that the attendance record identify the positions of Gordon G. Hoodak and Thomas Chapman, Jr. as principal and superintendent, respectively, in the Reading School District. Mr. Lauter moved to accept the January 9th minutes, with the revisions requested. Mr. Rothermel seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to approve the January 9th minutes.

Resolution #12-2007

2006 Annual Report: [0:37.10]

Mr. Miller described a format similar to that of the 2005 report, with more cross-referencing and citation of official actions. Mr. Rothermel thought the Capital Improvements Program and RiverPlace initiatives more accurately placed under their own headings, as opposed to calling them “redevelopment” activities. He suggested the “2007 Projections” section assume a broader role for the Planning Commission and its staff, especially with regard to the overall master planning of the City. He recognized the current state of participation, but hoped for more. Mr. Miller agreed, hoping certain changes would allow the Commission to reassert itself. He mentioned the land use ordinance revision efforts moving forward, and the anticipated cooperation with the County Planning Commission. He felt the scheduling of extra meetings and workshops would become necessary in that pursuit, thinking the regular meetings’ agenda too full for anything besides the subdivision and land development reviews.

Mr. Miller thought the current land use ordinances, the criticism often directed at them notwithstanding, were still full of relevant sections not likely to be deleted by any professional planner. He predicted the recommendations would be over and above much of what is currently codified, though the Zoning Ordinance might be made more flexible and more accommodating of mixed uses.

Mr. Rothermel said that the majority of the Zoning Ordinance was deliberately included by its author, Blake C. Marles, and agreed that most of the code was still germane today. He alluded to the much older Land Development Ordinance, which he felt need to be strengthened. Mr. Miller mentioned the many sections devoted to new road construction, on-lot septic systems, and other improvements rarely a part of land development in Reading. He noted that the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code allows more municipal authority over *design* than it had when the land use ordinances were last addressed.

Mr. Bealer, having since arrived, was informed of his appointment to the Blighted Property Review Committee. He accepted the charge and thanked the Commission for the recognition of his abilities.

Mr. Bealer pointed out a couple of typographical errors in the Report’s text. He asked if there were penalties for failing to record approved plans. Mr. Miller said the Planning Code imposes a timeline, but no specific recourse. Ms. Mayfield reported that the building codes officials have offered their cooperation in withholding building permits until plans are properly recorded.

Mr. Rothermel moved to endorse the 2006 draft Annual Report, subject to the modifications discussed. Mr. Reppert seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to support the endorsement, 6-0.

Resolution #13-2007

Subdivision and Land Development: (continued)

Review the **final** subdivision plan for the **Cotton Street Subdivision**, twelve (12) subdivisions and annexations to parcels south proposed for that parcel known as 415 South 14½ Street. [1:01.29]

Mr. Pick said the Redevelopment Authority of Berks County purchased the property in 2004, and demolished the “vacant block building” thereon. He said the adjoining owners have apparently been helping themselves to the parking opportunity, ever since. He said the plan proposes dividing the parcel into twelve pieces to be conveyed to those neighbors, with a request that they be added to each individual deed of record.

Mr. Rothermel asked about parking-related improvements. Mr. Miller said none were proposed as part of the plan, and questioned the possible legal status of the five-foot alley. Mr. Rothermel suggested that improvements be considered if the added land were to be used as off-street parking. Mr. Miller called it another zoning issue, the first being the size of the subdivided pieces and means of assignment to the adjoiners. Mr. Rothermel asked if all the neighboring owners had agreed to the conveyance. Mr. Pick answered yes. Mr. Rothermel wondered if those owners could collectively vacate whatever public access the alley may provide.

Mr. Miller thought the questions about the alley and the minimum lot sizes more than should be added as conditions to an approval, especially without a means to compel the owners to record those pieces with their intended deeds. Mr. Rothermel agreed that the size of the subdivisions needed to be resolved, before approval. He said the "alley" may be, at worst, un-buildable, that depending on the language of the deeds.

Mr. Rothermel suggested tabling the plan until the County and City staff can clarify the issues. Mr. Lauter seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to table the Cotton Street Subdivision, 6-0.

Review the **sketch** land development plan for **Birchcraft Kitchens Land Development Plans**, a proposed expansion of the furnishing assembly business at that parcel listed as 1900 Madison Avenue. [1:22.10]

Mr. Bogia described the setting, behind the Postal Service's distribution facility on North Fifth Street. He said the existing building is about 18,760 square feet, with a perimeter of stone in use as parking. He estimated a workforce of 30-40 employees, and a 10,000 square foot expansion planned. He said Birchcraft will seek to vacate that part of Madison Avenue abutting their property, they and the Postal Service being the only users, and thinking it a maintenance issue for the Department of Public Works. He offered the sketch plan, hoping to raise all the zoning issues before approaching the Zoning Hearing Board. He recognized the parking proposed in the setbacks, and offered to reduce the driveway width and design the parking areas per the initial Planning Office comments.

Mr. Miller mentioned the challenge of defining the different yards (for setback purposes) because of the lack of public thoroughfares and an obvious front. Upon verifying the street address with Mr. Howe, he affirmed the setback measures as shown on the plan. Mr. Bogia raised two other zoning questions about sections related to setbacks.

Mr. Palka asked about the history of the site. Mr. Howe said a textiles operation had previously used about half the building, Birchcraft having its own presence for the last thirty years. Mr. Bogia guessed Birchcraft would keep its other City property (1612-1620 Thorn Street) for the time being, but expected the development to reduce the current number of trips between facilities.

Review the **sketch** land development plan for **Evergreen Community Power - Power House Expansion**, a biomass-fueled power house and related improvements proposed at that parcel known as 800 South Street (United Corrstack, LLC). [1:37.18]

Mr. Stauffer recalled the presentation of an earlier design to the Commission in 2005. He said they have since acquired the property, and were directed by the parent company to consider modifications that would someday accommodate a second paper mill in the former Reading Tube Corporation building. He said the Zoning Hearing Board granted the additional height variance necessary. He offered the sketch plan showing the proposed changes, hoping to submit preliminary plans for the March meeting. Mr. Euclide described the layout of the plant, and its proposed improvements. Mr. Fell explained that the variance allowed the stack and adjoining structures to a maximum of 275 feet. He expected 220 feet to be the more likely measure, seven feet taller than had been proposed in 2005. He said the operating permit is under current review by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. He estimated the boiler to be 190 feet in height. Mr. Euclide said the current design calls for a boiler enclosed in its own building. Mr. Fell explained that they haven't received the necessary operating permit. And while the modeling suggests 220 feet as an adequate height, the Department may dictate higher. Mr. Miller asked if the designation of the "Reading Air Basin" affects the scrutiny of the permit application. Mr. Fell answered yes, at play in their decision to remain under a synthetic minor operating permit, rather than seeking the more flexible Title V permit (see 1990 modifications to the Clean Air Act).

Mr. Rothermel asked about the diameter of the stack. Mr. Fell estimated between six and eight feet at the top, to about twelve feet at its base. He assumed a metal construction, either a carbon steel with paint, or stainless steel. He said the boiler was ordered in May of 2006, from a supplier in Austria. He showed the Commission a diagram, and explained the biomass combustion; mostly wood residuals, with an energy output in anticipation of the future expansion. He said the circulating fluidized bed is widely recognized as the best balance between the energy and environmental benefits. He said the increasing height of the equipment is a function of the technology. He said the change from an open-air design to one enclosed would help mitigate nuisances, the noise being generated mostly

from the circulation fans, and the turbine with its own sound attenuation measures. He mentioned a noise survey for perimeter benchmarks, intending to stay within those benchmarks reported to be in the low/mid 60s decibel range (conversational level) toward the low 70s decibel range from punctuating noises, like trucks passing. Mr. Euclide added the position of the buildings housing the equipment as another factor.

Mr. Raffaelli asked about the traffic volume, between the deliveries of raw material and the shipping of finished products. Mr. Stauffer reported that the existing mill causes about 60 trucks/day, 5 days/week, with nominal traffic on the weekends. He projected the power plant, between the incoming fuel and removal of ash, to cause an additional 65 trucks/day, 5 days/week. He added that the former Reading Tube operation, “a mix point”, had about trucks/day, 5 days/week. Mr. Rothermel asked about the travel pattern. Mr. Stauffer said all traffic uses, or will use, the “Industrial Collector” via the Bingaman Street Bridge, Laurel, South Fifth and Canal Streets. He described the departure via Pine and South Fourth Streets to the Bridge. Mr. Rothermel asked how they control that route. Mr. Stauffer said Corrstack pays their bills, and that they usually learn the lesson after their first time trying to navigate the residential streets.

Mr. Fell said the power plant will be receiving all its fuel from one processing facility, most deliveries between 6:00pm and 6:00am. Mr. Stauffer named Zwicky & Sons Inc. in Robesonia. Mr. Raffaelli asked about the noises associated with those deliveries. Mr. Fell described trucks outfitted with Walking Floors®, and an all-enclosed system to minimize disturbances. Mr. Stauffer felt nighttime deliveries, and the use of the Industrial Collector, would minimize most traffic conflicts.

Mr. Rothermel asked about the location of the silage, and the difference in grade. Mr. Fell described a significant grade change between the parcel and South Ninth Street to the east.

Mr. Bealer asked about traffic if/when the second mill is operational. Mr. Stauffer estimated an additional 60 to 100 trucks/day depending on the design of the machine. Mr. Rothermel asked about the resulting pressure on the Bingaman Street (US222 Business)-West Shore Bypass (US422) interchange. Mr. Stauffer admitted there would be an impact, calling it and all the other Bypass interchanges “pinch point(s)”. He said the traffic had to take that route, and felt it another benefit of the off-hours trafficking.

Mr. Stauffer called the design “state of the art”, energy efficiency being paramount to the survival of the remaining North American paper mills.

Mr. Fell said they used the background data from the Titus Power Plant, a coal-fired generator about 1½ miles southeast in Cumru Township, for air flow modeling purposes, a rationale supported by the Department of Environmental Protection.

Mr. Bealer asked if they expected excess power from the plant. Mr. Stauffer answered yes, projecting about half of the 30MW produced to be available to ‘the grid’. He said if the second mill comes on-line, they’d again need to purchase electricity, though they’d have all the steam necessary, the production of which currently accounts for two-thirds of their energy costs. Mr. Fell estimated the plant to rate 60% efficiency, given the basic demand for steam in the paper drying process. He said the plant uses 9-10 MW of electricity, steady.

Mr. Raffaelli asked about measures to recapture the heat. Mr. Fell explained that heat would be recovered, to a point, estimating the discharge from stack at 350°F, lower temperatures risking precipitate corrosion. Mr. Raffaelli asked if “trash-to-steam” generation was a possibility. Mr. Stauffer said not currently, it requiring another specific permit. Mr. Fell clarified that they’re proposing a “combustor”, as opposed to an “incinerator”, 1400°F versus 3000°F operating temperatures respectively. He called Zwicky the only permitted solid waste reclamation/reprocessor in the state, testing each of his sources, and limited to a fixed period to process and deliver the product.

Mr. Lauter asked about monitoring. Mr. Stauffer described the in-house sampling required under the permit, and the computer monitoring system, the results of each kept on-record and available for audit.

Mr. Lauter clarified that the bigger design was specifically in expectation of an expansion. Mr. Fell affirmed, calling it a long-term strategy, but a project still viable without the second mill. Asked about the potential increase in employment, Mr. Stauffer expected 80-100 additional direct employees, if the second mill were opened. He said Corrstack currently employs 75 directly, the trucking and maintenance positions contracted. He said the steelworkers union has jurisdiction in the plant.

Mr. Rothermel asked about odor issues. Mr. Fell said the biomass, being mostly wood based, would tend to neutralize odors. He said the trucks will be covered throughout the delivery, minimizing the open exposure. Mr. Rothermel asked about the combustion stage. Mr. Fell said the boiler design, emissions equipment, and the limestone and sand injection mitigate the odors within.

Mr. Miller wondered about Zwicky’s capability in removing chemicals. Mr. Stauffer clarified that chemicals are handled in the combustion stage, Zwicky’s function limited to removal of metal contaminants, and

processing the fuel for size. In addition to the wood-based product, he mentioned the residual waste from the paper making process, and other materials proposed in the permit application, such as: burlap, food waste chocolate, and tire-derived fuel, though Corstack had no current plan to burn tires. Mr. Rothermel recalled a previous proposal for a tire product facility on the vacant parcel at 601 Canal Street, and a lot of opposition from the neighbors. Mr. Fell said tire-derived fuel, if used, is blended with the biomass. Mr. Raffaelli likened the energy value to no. 6 fuel oil, and noted the demand by cement kilns.

Mr. Rothermel felt the expansion, and the prospect of the second mill especially, required the County Transportation Planner's assessment of the Bingaman Street-West Shore Bypass interchange. Mr. Miller asked for something written regarding the traffic projections.

Mr. Palka asked about the likelihood of rail service. Mr. Stauffer cited the topographic challenges to using the rail line to the east, and the substandard construction of the spur line on their property as issues to resolve before shipping by rail.

Review the **final** land development plan for the **Millmont Elementary and Science Magnet**, a proposed reconstruction of the elementary school at that parcel known as 300 Carroll Street. [2:42.25]

Mr. Brady mentioned a meeting with the Planning Office staff on February 16th. He said there were no substantive changes from the version presented at the January meeting. He updated the Commission on the outcome of the efforts to have the overhead utility lines buried, explaining it as impractical because the homes served on the same line are not set up to receive underground services, nor are there established rights-of-way or ground-mounted transformers. He said the relocation of those poles to the residential sides of the streets will be temporary, during construction activities.

Mr. Brady addressed the zoning issues. He asked for interpretation on §27-1302, regarding the overall heights of the fences and walls, and exceptions granted retaining walls by §27-1306. The proposed fence, atop a brick retaining wall, exceeds six feet, reaching as high as ten feet, in places. He said the new design calls for a "wrought iron" effect, in aluminum, instead of the solid panels previously proposed. He said the height is necessary to protect play and storage areas. Mr. Rothermel felt the intent of the Zoning Ordinance governed fences facing public rights-of-way, the combined height not to exceed six feet from grade. He didn't dispute the District's perceived need, but directed them to the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Brady indicated his understanding, wondering if a conditional plan approval might be granted by the Commission. He asked for interpretation on §1503.2.B, regarding maximum driveway width, and the applicability to the interior of the property. Mr. Rothermel said they should seek the determination of the Zoning Administrator.

Mr. Brady requested two waivers of the Land Development Ordinance; §22-402.4.K and §22-602.G.5, both regarding the monumenting of public streets. Mr. Miller had no objections, suspecting there were probably enough existing markers to establish boundaries and rights-of-way. Mr. Krall reported that the first Conservation District comments had been received, the sanitary sewage planning module submitted, and a "will serve" letter received from the Water Authority.

Mr. Miller said the only remaining zoning issue was the traffic management plan required by the Zoning Hearing Board in its ruling. Mr. Krall reported speaking with the District's Superintendent, who wasn't anticipating much change in the traffic pattern. He said there are currently 21 students on three buses, the other students walking to school. Mr. Rothermel questioned the 1½ mile enrollment area. Mr. Krall said that is what he was told, and that the new school won't be serving a bigger area. Mr. Raffaelli said the state requires schools to provide transportation to students coming from over one mile, if requested. He said Millmont's boundary had been previously expanded to take enrollment pressure from Thomas Ford Elementary School. Mr. Miller clarified that it's the parent "drop-off" situation, and what the District intends to do to police and improve the situation, that matters. Mr. Krall said the drop-off situation wasn't likely to change much in the Millmont Elementary School, and magnet students would come from their home schools on four additional busses, one from each middle school. Mr. Miller asked if that was the arrangement with the other magnet schools. Mr. Krall said that was his understanding. Mr. Raffaelli, who serves as substitute principal at Glenside Elementary, disputed this claim. Mr. Bealer questioned the sufficiency of "four" busses to deliver 350 magnet students. Mr. Krall recognized the suspect calculations, and the Hearing Board's condition of a management plan. Mr. Miller referred to the traffic study, already satisfactorily completed, suggesting that the District officials themselves must indicate their intent to manage. Mr. Bealer said the Commission needed the assurance that busses and parents would not be blocking cartways or other restricted parking areas. Mr. Raffaelli figured that School faculty couldn't effectively or legally enforce traffic behavior, though other schools have so attempted. Mr. Rothermel claimed the Commission was discussing matters outside its purview. Mr. Miller said the language of the Hearing Board's ruling left it in the hands of Commission and the

Department of Public Works. Mr. Rothermel felt that Public Works alone was responsible for the impact on the streets. Mr. Miller said the City Engineer hesitates to make commentary on things not supported by firm standards, as does the Planning Office in its reviews. He characterized it as a “quality of life concern” in a residential setting, apart from the engineering issues.

Mr. Brady addressed a Public Works concern on the eight-foot curb “bump-outs” and the effect on Belvedere Avenue’s travel lanes. He offered to reduce the bump-outs to six feet instead. He said the painted “stop bars” crosswalks, and curb ramps, would be modified to address Public Works’ concerns.

Mr. Raffaelli voiced some concerns about the size and design of the bathrooms, relative to the intended capacity, and the provision of limited access to the cafeteria and bathrooms for possible off-hours events.

Mr. Adams reported that the Commission’s comments about the heating and ventilation exhaust, raised at the December 12th meeting, resulted in all the vents under classroom windows being limited to air intake.

Mr. Bealer moved to grant the two requested waivers from the monumentation requirements, §22-402.4.K and §22-602.G.5. Mr. Lauter seconded. And the Commission voted to grant the waivers, 5-0-1, Mr. Raffaelli abstaining.

Mr. Bealer moved to table the final plan, pending the Zoning Administrator’s clarification of the two zoning matters discussed, §§27-1302 and 1503.2.B. Mr. Palka seconded. And the Commission voted to table the final plan, 5-0-1, Mr. Raffaelli abstaining.

Review the **preliminary** land development plan for the **Reading Citadel/Intermediate High School**, a proposed conversion of the vacated St. Joseph Medical Center campus roughly bounded by North Eleventh, North Thirteenth, Elm and Walnut Streets. [3:38.03]

Mr. Brady, seeking preliminary approval, again mentioned the February 16th meeting with the Planning Office staff, and the progress made toward addressing the January review letter. He summarized the intent of the School, and the intended traffic patters, including: a two-way North Twelfth Street, between Elm and Walnut Streets; a two-way Walnut Street, between North Twelfth and North Thirteenth Streets in order to facilitate bus drop-offs on the School side; a four-way signal at North Twelfth and Elm Streets; a dedicated left-turning lane from North Twelfth Street; and, signalization at North Thirteenth and Elm Streets. The intersection at North Thirteenth and Walnut Streets would remain as is. He said the erosion and sedimentation control plan is under review by the Conservation District. Mr. Krall said the sewer planning module was submitted, predicting a waiver since the prior volume from the Medical Center exceeded (by about three times) the School’s projected demand. He used the Northwest Area Elementary School’s records as basis for the calculation. Mr. Brady said the District will install monuments at the corners of the proposed lots. He mentioned a submission to the Shade Tree Commission, and a lighting plan to be included with the final plan. He said new street lights are being considered for North Twelfth Street to match the building mounted fixtures. No lighting of the sports field is planned. He said all handicapped access improvements, stop bars and crosswalks will be installed on the street corners, as required. Mr. Krall said lot #3 will be redrawn so as to comply with the zoning minimum. Mr. McKissick said it could not be not joined to lot #2 because of conditions on the Department of Education reimbursements (warehouses areas are not eligible), estimated at \$4.5 million. Mr. Brady said cyclone fencing was proposed around the sports field, with railings atop the retaining walls, all within the six-foot zoning maximum, from grade.

Mr. Raffaelli said this was the District’s fourth attempt at second high school, and invoked educational design formulae suggesting that schools be limited to 1800-2200 square feet, minus another 20-25% for urban areas. He said here, 300,000 square feet for 2800 planned students, would exceed that standard. He recognized a higher density and vertical articulation than Reading High School, at 1500-1600 students, in 530,000 square feet. He suggested complications in the administration of such a facility.

Mr. Miller advised the Commission to predicate any action on the resolution of the minimum lot area issue. Mr. Lauter recalled the same Hearing Board condition of a traffic management plan. Mr. Rothermel cautioned against the entrance from Walnut Street, and the traffic obstacles that could result as parents watch their children from car to building. Mr. Raffaelli asked if the District planned staggered start/dismissal times. Mr. McKissick answered yes. Mr. Raffaelli noted the complicating factor of the vocational students and their bussing times.

Mr. McKissick described the project as four autonomous magnet schools, about 650 pupils each, with independent administration and guidance counseling. He said students would stay on their floor throughout the school day, but for lunches, physical education and music programs. He validated Mr. Raffaelli’s position on the challenges of building height, but noted the accesses to the outdoor grade available from five different stories, because of the hillside, such that no student would have to move more than two floors in either direction.

Mr. Reppert moved to accept the preliminary plan for the Reading Citadel, provided that the parcels meet

the standards of the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Rothermel seconded. And the Commission voted to approve the preliminary plan, 5-0-1, Mr. Raffaelli abstaining.

Resolution #14-2007

Review the **preliminary** land development plan for the **15½ Street Land Development**, a subdivision and eight single-family attached dwellings proposed at those parcels known as 614, 631 and 632 South 15½ Street. [4:17.00]

Mr. Lehmann said they hoped to advance the 15½ Street plan to the same point as the 15th Street plan, granted waivers at the December meeting. He said they were seeking the same five waivers, for the same reasons: §22-402.4.H, the required 800-scale of the location map; §22-502.4.B, the 12% limit on street centerlines; §22-502.5.B, the required vertical curves transitions; §22-502.7.A, the required cul-de-sacs on dead-end streets; and, §22-508.1.D.1 the required half-acre of recreation facilities for residential subdivisions of fifty or more units.

Ms. Mayfield asked about the design of the fire access up-slope, and its integrity under the load of heavy vehicles. Mr. Lehmann said that neither the Fire Department, nor the City Engineer had ever expressed a concern. He said they had discussed adequate soil compaction.

Mr. Miller asked if the houses would have sprinkler systems. Mr. Naughton said he was working with the Fire Marshal, and Tom Lynam, Jr. of S&L Mechanical, Inc., and waiting for some response from each. He said all units were so designed, "at this moment". Mr. Lehmann noted concerns about cost. Mr. Naughton said he was "doing (his) best", that the issue was not in his hands, and though he had previously agreed to install sprinklers, there were issues with water, and the installation contractor. Mr. Raffaelli asked about the firewall construction. Mr. Lehmann said the plans show masonry block. Mr. Naughton said he was accommodating the Fire Department.

Mr. Bealer asked that each waiver be acted upon, separately.

Mr. Miller read the request to waive (§22-402.4.H) the required location map at 800-scale, and allow it at 400-scale. Mr. Rothermel made the motion, and Mr. Lauter seconded. The Commission voted unanimously to grant the waiver on location map scale, 6 to 0.

Mr. Miller read the request to waive (§22-502.4.B) the maximum allowed centerline grade of twelve (12%) percent, and allow a maximum of 15.48%. Mr. Reppert made the motion, and Mr. Palka seconded. The Commission voted to grant the waiver on maximum centerline grade, 4 to 2, Mr. Raffaelli and Mr. Bealer voting against.

Mr. Miller read the request to waive (§22-502.5.B) the required vertical curves between certain grade transitions. Mr. Rothermel made the motion, and Mr. Lauter seconded. The Commission voted unanimously to grant the waiver from the required vertical curve transitions, 6 to 0.

Mr. Miller read the request to waive (§22-502.7.A) the prohibition on dead-end streets. Mr. Reppert made the motion, and Mr. Palka seconded. The Commission voted 3 to 3 on the waiver of the required cul-de-sac, Mr. Raffaelli, Mr. Lauter and Mr. Bealer voting against, resulting in a denial.

Mr. Miller read the request to waive (§22-508.1.D.1) the required half-acre of recreation facilities for fifty homes. He said he took the waiver previously granted the 15th Street plan to satisfy the issue for the full 52-unit build-out. Mr. Rothermel made the motion, and Mr. Palka seconded. The Commission voted unanimously to grant the waiver of the required recreation facilities, 6 to 0.

Mr. Lehmann thanked the Commission, and noted the zoning hearing the following night. He said once the necessary variances were granted, they'd be seeking the Commission's approval of the plans. Mr. Miller predicted another 'request for extension' would be necessary to cover the time delay.

After a brief discussion of the waivers voted upon, Mr. Bealer moved to adjourn the February meeting. Mr. Lauter seconded. And the Commission agreed unanimously to adjourn the February meeting, 6 to 0. – 11:45 pm.