

Minutes
Regular meeting of the City of Reading Planning Commission
January 26, 2010 at 7:00 pm

Members present:

Ermete J. Raffaelli, Chairman
Brian Bingaman, Vice Chairman
Michael E. Lauter, Secretary
Wayne Jonas Bealer, Assistant Secretary
Frederic dep Rothermel Jr.

Staff present:

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

Others present:

Thomas B. Ludgate, Ludgate Engineering Corporation
Alan W. Shuman, Shuman Development Group, Inc.
Bradford R. Grauel, David Erb Contractors, Inc.
Stephen Hoffman, Quaker Maid Meats, Inc.
Robert P. Stackhouse, Stackhouse Bensinger, Inc.
Heidi B. Masano, Masano Bradley, LLP
Douglas F. Smith, Alvernia University
Bernette D. Wrobel, Pagoda Electrical, Inc.
Harry Ballas, Pagoda Electrical, Inc.
David R. Roche, Borough of Kenhorst
Brenda L. Marks
Stacy L. Hertzog
E. Andrew Molteni, Environmental Advisory Board
Charlie S. Schmehl, Urban Research & Development Corporation
Carole Duran, Reading Eagle Company

Chairman Raffaelli called the January 26th meeting to order, and asked for acceptance of the agenda. Mr. Miller asked that the agenda be modified to cover the five blighted property recommendations postponed from the November meeting, the review of a conditional use application for additional apartment units at 1041 Penn Street, and consideration of the "Russell Plywood New Warehouse" plan, now expiring under the time limits of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. Mr. Lauter moved to accept the January agenda, with the additions. Mr. Rothermel seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to accept the January 26th agenda.

Subdivision and Land Development:

2nd Street Learning Center (Opportunity House) - final subdivision/land development plan [0:01.34]

Mr. Ludgate reminded the Commission of the preliminary plan presentation at the December meeting, and characterized the final plan as "essentially the same", with some corrections per the review comments. He briefly described the site layout, and felt he could satisfy the latest Planning Office review. Mr. Miller acknowledged the progress made, while still waiting on the Department of Public Works and Berks County Conservation District reviews. He said that, being a final plan, the Commission should table it, until those communications are received. He recalled the preliminary plan presentation being similarly tabled, but good enough that the Commission invited the final plan application. Discussion of procedure continued, including the possibility of a preliminary approval. Ms. Mayfield advised waiting until something was provided from Public Works. Mr. Ludgate mentioned that they were hoping to break ground in the near future, but thought a February answer would be sufficient. Mr. Miller suggested they work toward a 'record' form of the plan, which can be both approved and endorsed at the February meeting.

Mr. Bealer moved to table the plan, pending the anticipated reviews. Mr. Bingaman seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to table Opportunity House's final plan.

Oley Street Retail Center (Shuman Development Group) - sketch subdivision/land development plan [0:09.38]

Mr. Ludgate described location, and the existing parking lot, on a 1.9-acre parcel. He proposed a 25,000-square foot building, to house a Save-A-Lot grocery and a Dollar General store. He described the off-street parking area, with accesses from North 8th Street, and one shared, from Oley Street, with the neighboring building (No. 4, at 626 North 9th Street). He said the site, overall, would decrease in its impervious cover, from nearly 100 percent to 83-84 percent with the buffer strips and landscaped islands proposed for the parking lot. He said street trees and shrubs will dress up the perimeter; about 30 new trees altogether. He said they weren't proposing any dramatic changes to the grade of the site, though a retaining wall inside the southern boundary would at once level the building site, and provide opportunity for 'buffering and screening' of the loading areas. He said a new stormwater collection system would replace the present 'sheet flow' condition. He said they've already received a zoning permit, and hope to proceed with a final plan submission. Turning to the architectural elevations, he described individual storefronts for the two tenants, in an otherwise uniform building. Asked about the long blank look of the side facing North 8th Street, Mr. Shuman said the grocery store shelves would preclude the possibility of windows, but noted the street trees that would screen it. Regarding the combination of masonry block and metal paneling, Mr. Rothermel suggested intervals of color differentiation to 'break up' the appearance. Mr. Shuman preferred something like the series of 20-foot trellises and purple wisteria on some of the neighboring projects. He mentioned the standing-seam metal awning added to the "Burlington Coat Factory building" renovation (at 1920 Kutztown Road) as another planned detail, and said the color will match the "cream" prevailing on the other former outlet buildings. Answering a question about the several existing curb cuts around the perimeter, Mr. Shuman confirmed that they would be closed, allowing for the added green space and better traffic control. The Commission members expressed their appreciation of the coordinated color scheme and the trellis effect. Mr. Shuman cited graffiti deterrence as another reason to treat the blank façade. For parking, Mr. Ludgate said 95 off-street spaces are required, and 116 spaces are proposed. Mr. Bealer asked about the availability of the parking behind the meat market (No. 5, at 817 Oley Street). Mr. Shuman reported selling the property in March, to the owners of a bakery (El Gallito Mexican Food Store), who've also leased the entire "Old Navy building" (No. 7, at 626 North 9th Street). He added that there had been a total of 640,000 square feet of retail in the former outlet complex, expecting that the neighborhood focus of the incoming tenants should prove less of a parking impact than the "destination" outlet shopping. He said Building No. 4 is currently being converted for smaller retail spaces, as he has had more success leasing on that scale. He said that property includes about 70 parking spaces. Answering concerns about the retaining wall on southern boundary, he said that neighbor has been reducing/demolishing it. He mentioned having asked for assistance from the building inspectors, and the codes inspectors for their solid waste issues. Mr. Raffaelli suggested a semi-permeable paving for the parking area. Mr. Shuman said he has researched it, but declined due to limitations in the warranties, especially where trucks are involved. Mr. Ludgate noted the tendency of such pavement to become clogged with fine particulates and oils over time, unless scrubbed clean, as another drawback. He said the underlying drain pipes will be perforated, achieving some of that desired infiltration. He felt pervious paving was better left to less-trafficked lots. Mr. Shuman said the grocer ruled out the use of anything (like individual pavers) that impedes the movement of shopping carts. Mr. Rothermel asked about the needs of the "big mill building" (No. 10, at 702 North 8th Street), if ever redeveloped, sensing the new parking arrangements may limit its potential. Mr. Shuman recalled several 'near sales' of the building, to parties generally interested in designing apartments. He said a future buyer may then look toward the lot behind Building No. 5, and possibly seek additional space from Norfolk Southern Corporation along the railroad (at 735 Oley Street), estimating a potential 74 and 40 spaces respectively. Asked about moving onto a final plan submission, Mr. Miller raised no objection, but advised waiting until the Conservation District acts on the erosion and sedimentation control proposed. Mr. Ludgate reported that to be underway, and noted the clearance from the Zoning Office. Ms. Mayfield reminded that a municipal improvements agreement would also be required.

Quaker Maid Parking and Trailer Storage - final subdivision/land development plan [0:38.07]

Mr. Graul described the location, between Arlington and Crestmont Streets. He said the site is composed of seven different properties, all purchased by Quaker Maid. He said the former uses were a combination of residential and commercial, including the former Grab-A-Cab taxi service. He proposed demolition of the existing structures for employee parking and tractor-trailer storage, with stormwater management and landscaping. Asked to describe the circulation, Mr. Graul said all traffic would enter from Crestmont. He said part of the site already serves as parking; they're looking to expand it, and also provide landscaped buffers to the residential properties neighboring to the north, and toward Arlington Street. He said there is no curbing along the Crestmont Street side. One curb cut, on Arlington, will be closed. An infiltration trench will manage the stormwater. He called the project "a stopgap", expecting the site would eventually be used for a future plant expansion, and intending to leave most of

the lot unpaved. Asked if they had a zoning permit, Mr. Graul said they were currently “working through” zoning. He said the site spans two different zoning districts, and will require a map change. Mr. Rothermel asked if the Ordinance allows gravel parking areas. Mr. Graul answered yes, but upon Mr. Miller’s correction, said they’d be seeking that relief. For landscaping, he proposed a row of arborvitae on 6-foot spacing along the Arlington Street side. Mr. Rothermel recommended they consider staggering their placement, for a less rigid look. Mr. Bealer asked if the constituent parcels would be combined as one. Mr. Graul said that wasn’t their intent, but would if required. Asked if the work had already begun, Mr. Graul answered the demolition of the existing buildings and “stabilization” of the site. He said the houses should have been condemned. Mr. Raffaelli called it presumptuous to commence the development before submitting the plan. He recalled Quaker Maid’s previous project as another “emergency”, because a competitor went out of business, and complained that it hadn’t been built as proposed. Mr. Graul believed it had been. Asked if the reviews of Public Works and County Planning had been received, Mr. Miller said not. Mr. Graul said three lights are proposed to illuminate the parking lot. Mr. Miller noted that they’ve already been installed. Asked if they’d have sufficient ‘cutoffs’, Mr. Graul answered yes. Ms. Mayfield reported that Quaker Maid has agreed to extend the Planning Code’s time limits, knowing Commission cannot take action until and if the zoning is changed, and permits issued. She said her research confirms that arrangement is okay, estimating four to five months until the Commission can act. Asked if they have an approved erosion and sedimentation control plan, Mr. Graul answered that everything was submitted to the Conservation District for review. Mr. Miller noted that the site has already been excavated, wondering what to do in the meantime. Ms. Mayfield recommended that the Commission not see the plan before the zoning map change, at least. Mr. Miller noted the disturbance, and mud in streets. Ms. Mayfield countered that it wasn’t the Commission’s issue to enforce.

Mr. Rothermel moved to table the final plan, until the zoning issues are resolved, and other required reviews and approvals are provided. Mr. Bingaman seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to table the “Quaker Maid Parking and Trailer Storage” plan.

Other business:

§513.a approval reaffirmation-South Campus Project (Alvernia University) [0:56.14]

Ms. Mayfield announced that Charlie Schmehl had deferred to Alvernia’s party in order of appearance. Mr. Stackhouse said there was no plan to present, and refreshed the Commission on the plan review in 2008, when the project was approved, and building permits were issued. He said the construction has since been completed, without the plans ever being recorded. Asked if that was due to the lack of a zoning permit, Mr. Stackhouse produced a permit issued January 25th (Control No. 2010-47). He recalled the previous Zoning Administrator (Sopka) sending a letter stating that all the zoning issues had been addressed. He said they submitted an application, and had been expecting a phone call when the permit was issued. He said that he assumed that permit had been issued, and before the building permits were. Mr. Bealer understood that the current Zoning Administrator (Oehler) determined a hearing was necessary. Mr. Stackhouse referred again to the permit, claiming the incumbent Administrator wanted to make sure the plans were the same as those originally presented. Mr. Raffaelli inquired about rumors that the facility has been rented to other athletic organizations. Mr. Smith said only Alvernia students, were using it. Ms. Mayfield noted that the zoning permit limits its use to University functions, assuring the same conditions will be stated on the certificate of occupancy. Mr. Miller asked if the lighting plan included in the original plan set accurately reflects what’s been installed. Mr. Stackhouse, clarifying that it was a photometric plan based on one lighting manufacturer’s specifications, said they opted for a different product (Hubbell) with different photometrics, but nonetheless conforming to the City ordinance. Mr. Miller asked if it accurately showed the ‘as-built’ measures, needing the plan set to be updated, if different. Mr. Stackhouse said the manufacturer typically isn’t chosen at time of the plan review. Mr. Miller noted that the plan had model numbers and measurements. Mr. Smith offered to provide the updated plan. Ms. Wrobel put the actual difference at 0.3 foot candles.

Mr. Raffaelli, turning to the Kenhorst residents in attendance, offered the opportunity for audience questions. At the Chair’s request, Mr. Rothermel first recited the conditions attached to the zoning permit. Mr. Roche introduced himself as a member of Kenhorst’s Borough Council, confused by the process and the Borough’s part in it. He mentioned receiving a copy of the meeting minutes, and noted that the County Planning Commission had directed Alvernia to communicate its intentions to the Borough. He said the then-Borough Manager (Jackson), responded with a letter acknowledging compliance, but without mentioning it to anyone on Borough Council. He admitted that was the Borough’s mistake, but wondered how a project could be constructed, and used beginning in June, without first having zoning approval. He said, through a ‘Right-To-Know request’, the City’s Managing Director had confirmed there was no zoning permit. Mr. Stackhouse answered that the permit had been issued a day

earlier (January 25th), though application was made in September. He said there was a letter from the then-Zoning Administrator certifying compliance. Ms. Mayfield noted that building permits were also issued ahead of a zoning permit. Mr. Roche referred to his copy of the October 2008 plan, and said the current Zoning Administrator stated that the University's light was restricted to within the municipal boundary. He said 5.5 foot-candles have been measured on Woodcrest Drive, citing the elevation difference between the field and the homes as an aggravating factor. He acknowledged a cooperative tone from University officials seeking a solution. He thanked the Commission for the opportunity to express his frustration, and noted the residential zoning around Alvernia. Mr. Raffaelli regretted whatever the Commission may have missed. Mr. Miller countered that it was considered, and if accurate would not be a problem. He asked about the "sound level evaluation" conducted by Spotts Stevens & McCoy. Mr. Stackhouse said it found levels to be slightly above the background. He stated that the City doesn't have a noise level ordinance. Mr. Miller clarified that, while the allowed level may not be quantified, the Ordinance clearly restricts noise to the property generating it. He said such nuisances are similarly covered under the City's Health and Safety Ordinance. Mr. Stackhouse characterized the noise as spikes, adding that cars and other background noises actually exceed the public-address system, at times. Mr. Smith said the University voluntarily reduced the volume and locked the controls from all but authorized employees. Mr. Lauter asked about the use of the field since these most recent studies. Mr. Smith noted the University's winter break and other seasonal considerations for a recent decline in its use. Ms. Marks presented photographs, from sometime in October, showing the effect of the lights on her Woodcrest Drive property. She said they are in use almost every night. Mr. Smith countered that they hadn't been on in the last six to seven weeks. He said they've voluntarily limited their use of the lights to 11:00p, anyway, and planned to meet with neighbors the next day (January 27th). He acknowledged the field has been a new management experience for the University. Mr. Miller, referring to all the focus on the Ordinance's five-foot-candle limit, noted that its previous section governs the impact of light trespass on public streets and residential properties. Mr. Raffaelli stressed that the Commission must be responsive when development has implications for municipal neighbors, hoping the University would consider landscaping that might mitigate that impact. Mr. Rothermel agreed, suggesting that evergreen plants would be necessary, for their density. Mr. Smith noted 11 (deciduous) trees planted in that area, though not yet mature. He said evergreens were ruled out because of their needle drop. Mr. Roche again noted the factor of elevation change. Mr. Stackhouse characterized the problem as one of glare, and not of 'foot-candles'. Mr. Roche insisted it was both, noting the recommended illumination for parking lots was much lower, at about 1.5 foot-candles. Ms. Hertzog, of Wingate Avenue, reported that the public-address system travels further than the University realizes. She felt their idea of "late" conflicted with the neighborhood's, and thought that even 9:00p was too late for families with children. Mr. Smith said the public-address system is off by 9:30p, and only used during athletic events. Ms. Hertzog disagreed, feeling that even two nights a week is too often. Asked for his recommendation, Mr. Miller said he could not recommend approval, for what he considered to be a clear violation of the ordinances and the conditions stated on the zoning permit. Ms. Mayfield called it a zoning enforcement matter. Ms. Masano stated that the University is committed to compliance. She said they've come back to the Commission only because the Planning Code's 90-day time constraint on recording plans has expired. Asked for her opinion, Ms. Mayfield recommended reaffirming the plan, unless a basis for denial can be cited. Mr. Miller asked why the Planning Commission should approve a project already constructed. Ms. Masano countered that they were issued a building permit. Mr. Miller noted that they were building before that, and even before they had permission to begin excavation. He called the breakdown of the land development process "complete". Mr. Stackhouse said the plan was previously approved. Mr. Miller reminded that approval was conditioned on a zoning permit and the Conservation District's approval of the erosion and sedimentation control plan, permissions required to move the plan forward for endorsement and recording. Discussion continued on the 'zoning versus land development' responsibility for the issues.

Relying on the Planning Commission's original approval (resolution no. 65-2008) for a plan it had been told was compliant with the Zoning Ordinance, Mr. Rothermel moved to reaffirm the South Campus Project plan, as originally presented. Mr. Bealer seconded. And the Commission voted 4 to 1 to reaffirm Alvernia's final plan for the "South Campus Project", Mr. Bingaman casting the dissent.

Resolution #1-2010

§209.1.b.2 review-draft zoning ordinance by Urban Research & Development Corporation [1:52.56]

Mr. Schmehl explained that his firm was retained to develop new zoning and subdivision/land development ordinances, and an official map for the City. He recalled several meetings with a committee charged with steering the preparation of the draft, now ready for the Planning Commission's consideration. He mentioned a memorandum prepared to summarize the major changes proposed. He briefly explained the adoption process, including the need

for a public meeting hosted by the Commission who, together with the County Planners, have an opportunity to recommend changes, and later, a hearing by City Council. Noting the requirement that the County must consider whatever becomes the final version, he said the City should expect some 'back-and-forth'. He said they weren't presently recommending any changes to the Zoning Map. Ms. Mayfield mentioned a couple of landowner petitions for map changes pending. Mr. Bealer said the "Rebuilding Reading" Act 47 study committee was asking for an estimated time until adoption. Mr. Schmehl said that depends on the review procedures and City Council's reception, estimating a "best-case scenario" of about six months.

Following some discussion of available meeting dates, Thursday, February 11th emerged as an opportunity for the Commission to focus on the draft in a "workshop" setting, and Tuesday, March 9th for an "open house" and public meeting to consider forwarding the work to City Council. Mr. Schmehl asked that the Planning Office prepare the necessary legal notices. Explaining the concept of an 'official map', he characterized it as a municipality's tool to reserve lands for certain future improvements, such as sewers, roads, and preservation lands. He said it would give the City a one-year right of first refusal, when that land is offered for sale. Mr. Rothermel alluded to possible changes for the Zoning Map, and asked that the Planning Office provide paper copies of the current Map to the Commission members.

Mr. Rothermel moved to schedule and advertise a Planning Commission workshop for Thursday, February 11th at 4:00p and public meeting Tuesday, March 9th at 7:00p, with a 6:30p open house, for the purpose of considering a new zoning ordinance. Mr. Bealer seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to schedule the meetings.

Resolution #2-2010

§508.3 agreement to extension-Russell Plywood New Warehouse - preliminary land development plan [2:26.15]

Mr. Miller advised the Commission to deny the Russell Plywood plan, because of the Planning Code time limits. He reported communicating that time consideration, by email (January 13th) to the project engineer and the land owner, but receiving no response. He said they never applied for approvals from the Zoning Office, and that a denial letter from the Conservation District was the only recent news of it.

Mr. Rothermel moved to deny the Russell Plywood New Warehouse preliminary plan, on the reasons set forth in the latest Planning Office review, dated September 18, 2009. Mr. Bealer seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to deny the Russell Plywood warehouse plan.

Resolution #3-2010

Blighted Property Review Committee, recommendations for reuse:

... continuing from the November 24, 2009 meeting...

212 South 8th Street (212 South 8th Street, Ltd. since 20060331) – recommendation for reuse [2:30.15]

Mr. Miller recalled a question about the future zoning of the property. Mr. Bealer said the Review Committee determined it best to let a potential developer cover that, and have the Commission consider it as currently zoned. Mr. Miller asked if the Community Development Department and the Redevelopment Authority had resolved an arrangement for the custody of acquired properties. Mr. Bealer said they were still negotiating. Asked about the "City-wide environmental analysis" mentioned at the November meeting, Mr. Bealer reported it complete, and the Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2 (NSP2) funds received. He said the environmental study was an overview of the entire city, based on another report from two years prior, and not assessments of individual property conditions.

Mr. Rothermel moved to recommend the reuse of 212 South 8th Street as 'manufacturing-commercial', or a qualifying accessory thereto, and conforming to the dimensional standards of the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Lauter seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to forward the recommendation.

Resolution #4-2010

157 North Front Street (Buy We Will, LLC from 20050900 to Lissette Chevalier, Willys Abreu & Simeon Abreu 20090827) – recommendation for reuse [2:33.08]

Mr. Bealer reported progress made, and expected the codes officials would eventually drop the property from the 'blighted' list. He said no recommendation was necessary. Mr. Miller recalled questions about the number of apartment units, and off-street parking available. Mr. Bealer said the work to date included a general clean up and restoration of the 'major systems'. He said the new owners are aware of the potential zoning issues.

228 North 2nd Street (Edward R. Holt & Cherri L. Rohrbaugh from ??????? to Celia Iris Garcia 20091020) – recommendation for reuse [2:34.50]

Mr. Bealer advised the Commission to proceed. He said the building inspectors haven't seen any improvement. Asked about the possible involvement of Neighborhood Housing Services, Mr. Bealer indicated that, should they decide to, they would rehabilitate it consistent with the Commission recommendation.

Mr. Lauter moved to recommend the reuse of 228 North 2nd Street as 'residential', or a qualifying accessory thereto, and conforming to the dimensional standards of the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Rothermel seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to forward the recommendation.

Resolution #5-2010

210 North Front Street (Amado Brito from ??????? to Simon L. Aquino-Almonte & Dilenia A. Batista 20090916) – recommendation for reuse [2:36.16]

Mr. Bealer said that, although the exterior has been improved, no other progress has been reported.

Mr. Bingaman moved to recommend the reuse of 210 North Front Street as 'residential', or a qualifying accessory thereto, and conforming to the dimensional standards of the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Lauter seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to forward the recommendation.

Resolution #6-2010

153 Walnut Street (Ronald L. Heckman since 19940308) – recommendation for reuse [2:37.29]

Ms. Mayfield said the case is in litigation. On her advisement, the Commission took no action.

§603.c.2 conditional use review-1041 Penn Street (conversion) [2:38.13]

Mr. Miller apologized for overlooking this matter on the December agenda. He said City Council has since held the required public hearing. Ms. Mayfield said the Commission could communicate an opinion if it chooses, but that the record is officially closed, and it would not be made part of it. Mr. Miller said he couldn't verify compliance with the zoning criteria, based on the materials provided by the applicant. He added that the property appears to have been sold. Ms. Mayfield said she was researching how that affected the application. It was agreed that the Commission's recommendation was unnecessary.

Mr. Rothermel questioned a recent newspaper article announcing a City Council award of a \$120,000 contract for a Trexlertown firm to design improvement standards the 500 block of Franklin Street. He wondered if the Planning Office was involved. Mr. Miller said he had no involvement in the contract itself, but assumed it came of the "Downtown 2020" initiative where he participated at the committee level. Mr. Rothermel recalled past efforts at coordinating downtown infrastructure and improvements, and questioned the perceived need to develop new standards. He asked about the status of the "Penn Corridor" initiative, long held as the preferred method of long-range downtown planning. He wondered why the Planning Commission had no part in the discussion, resenting that the 'planning' board's role has been limited to oversight of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. Mr. Miller concurred, noting that Pennsylvania's stated intentions for planning agencies have not been followed in Reading. He likened the downtown planning to that of the zoning ordinance rewrite; both planning agency roles that the City prefers to delegate to ad hoc committees, ostensibly for the perceived 'buy in'. He said the Corridor initiative "comes and goes", but that the idea for a joint management authority never took hold in the neighboring municipalities. He said the Administration decided to move ahead on projects it feels it can accomplish. He stressed that coordination remains a high priority, in part to minimizing the necessary inventories of replacement parts. He said the primary aim of the lighting project is to intensify the illumination levels, expecting some of the 'bishop's crook' standards on outlying streets to be used for 'infill' on Penn Street, while alternate, and more-affordable standards are developed for Franklin, Washington, and later Court and Cherry Streets. He doubted those replacements would match the quality or stature as the custom-made 'bishop's crooks'. Clarifying that he was offering an explanation, as opposed to a defense, he agreed that the Commission has been reduced to little more than 'rubber stamp' for development plans - some built in advance.

Mr. Rothermel, hearing rumors that the Administration intends to convert the Penn Room from a meeting space to other administrative uses, recalled the careful study that went into the previous City Hall renovations. He warned that the need for a smaller, more-accessible meeting space is as relevant today as it was then. Mr. Miller said he was unaware of the decision, still under the impression that the "web-casting" contract included hook-ups for the Penn

Room. Mr. Bealer explained that they are proposing to convert the room as a 'one-stop' information counter, similar to what the City of Allentown has on its second floor. He said the recommendation was proposed by the "Rebuilding Reading" committee. Mr. Rothermel cautioned against blindly copying the processes of other cities. Asked where the meeting space might be relocated, Mr. Bealer said somewhere on the second floor. Mr. Miller asked what the "Rebuilding Reading" committee was. Mr. Bealer called it an "anti-poverty commission set up by the Mayor", as part of the Act 47 maneuvers, and meeting every second Monday in Council Chambers. He mentioned his involvement in a housing subcommittee. Asked how many people were involved in the committee, Mr. Bealer estimated 30.

Mr. Rothermel asked about the new (Sunoco) gas station on Warren Street, wondering why the Commission hadn't reviewed a land development plan. Mr. Miller said that, like the Alvernia situation, they were given building permits without a land development approval.

review the draft December 22, 2009 meeting minutes [3:02.10]

Mr. Rothermel moved to approve the December meeting minutes, subject to whatever grammatical edits were deemed necessary. Mr. Bealer seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to accept the December 22nd meeting minutes.

Resolution #7-2010

Mr. Bingaman moved to adjourn the January meeting. Mr. Lauter seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the January 26th meeting. - 10:04 pm.