

Minutes
Regular meeting of the City of Reading Planning Commission
July 10, 2007 at 7:00 pm

Members present:

Ermete J. Raffaelli, Chairman
David N. Reppert, Vice Chairman
Michael E. Lauter, Secretary
Edmund Palka

Staff present:

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

Others present:

Sylvia B. Deyé, Dimensional Architecture, PC
Kent D. Morey, Spotts Stevens & McCoy, Inc.
Terrance E. Sargent, Lord, Aeck & Sargent, Inc.
David M. Settle, Entech Engineering, Inc.
D. Scott Adams, Albright College
John R. Hill, Muhlenberg Greene Architects, Ltd.
Howard Quaintance, Muhlenberg Greene Architects, Ltd.
Kevin M. Mohn, Systems Design Engineering, Inc.
Larry R. Orkus, Reading Eagle Company
J. Michael Engle, Reading Eagle Company
W. Casey Deller, C.S. Davidson, Inc.
Theodore Bassano, Reading Area Community College
John Keegan, Reading Area Community College
Gregg A. Bogia, Bogia Engineering Inc.
Richard B. Keffer, Olsen Design Group Architects
Michael R. Rado, Hydrojet, Incorporated
Timothy S. Howe, Birchcraft Kitchens, Inc.
Mark H. Koch, Koch & Koch

Chairman Raffaelli called the July 10th meeting to order, reminded presenters to sign the attendance sheet, and asked for acceptance of the agenda. Mr. Lauter moved to accept the agenda. Mr. Palka seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to approve the July agenda.

Subdivision and Land Development:

Review the **parking lot** land development plan for **115-117 South Fourth Street**, off-street parking proposed at that parcel known as 115 South 4th Street. [0:00.54]

Ms. Deyé distributed copies of the plan, described the proposed addition to the existing apartment building, its existing parking lot, the fences and gates that surround it. She said there exists, and will remain, twelve apartments, increasing only in area, and not number. She described the parallel parking stalls as 9-by-12 feet, per the dimensional requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, and an 18-foot, 6-inch center aisle.

Mr. Miller cautioned that the Zoning Hearing Board had yet to rule, there being several variances necessary to permit the current design. He noted that the landscaping standards were not appealed. Ms. Deyé affirmed, and offered window boxes on the rear elevation windows. She said her client contends these are existing conditions, and notes the similar situation on neighboring properties. Mr. Miller asked if they recognized these as zoning requirements. Ms. Deyé acknowledged, and noted the rear yard setback, already appealed. Mr. Miller recognized the size constraints, and existing paving, wondering about possible designs solutions. He again deferred to the Hearing Board, and the required variances, some requested and some not. He advised addressing the landscaping and screening issues prior to the Board's decision.

Mr. Raffaelli asked if the building was the former Moynihan apartment building. Ms. Deyé wasn't sure, but noted the quality of the rehabilitation work.

Mr. Miller recommended the plan be tabled, pending the outcome of the zoning appeal. He asked what

existed for fencing and walls. Ms. Deyé indicated two 8-foot chain-link fences, each owned by the neighboring properties. Mr. Miller asked about the open area within the middle of the building. Ms. Deyé described it as a courtyard, with potential for potted plantings and a “New Orleans feel”. Mr. Lauter asked who’d take responsibility for the window boxes. Ms. Deyé suggested the tenants themselves, per the direction of a strict landlord, property manager and lease agreement. Mr. Lauter suggested installation on the chain link fences, with the consent of the neighbors and maintenance responsibility of the property manager.

Mr. Raffaelli asked about stormwater planning and concerns. Mr. Miller explained the City Engineer’s position that an existing condition, unaltered, wouldn’t require any additional facilities. Mr. Reppert wondered about the parallel parking maneuvers. Ms. Deyé said vehicles must back out of the lot. Mr. Reppert thought the center driveway might be narrowed to allow for greening along the fence lines. Ms. Deyé said that was a possibility, if acceptable to the Zoning and Planning offices, and the Fire Department. Mr. Miller felt there easily enough working room for a trellis line, and some climbing vines. Mr. Reppert thought the tenants would appreciate the treatment, as well.

Mr. Lauter asked if the 1½-space-per-apartment parking standard had been appealed. Ms. Deyé said not, calling it an existing condition. Mr. Miller agreed. Ms. Deyé said the owner has opportunities to rent additional off-street parking from a property nearby. Mr. Lauter supported any efforts at visual enhancement and softening, and applauded their restoration efforts in an idle building.

Ms. Mayfield affirmed the staff’s recommendation to table the plan, pending the Zoning Hearing Board’s ruling. Mr. Lauter moved to table the 115-117 South Fourth Street plan. Mr. Reppert seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to table the parking lot plan, pending the outcome of the zoning appeal.

Review the **final** land development plan for **Proposed Building 143 – Alloy Storage**, a storage building proposed at that parcel known as 101 Bern Street. [0:19.21]

Mr. Morey realized the County Planning review requirement, among others, and wasn’t expecting approval. He mentioned a few other items to discuss before finalizing the design, and revisions required by the Planning Office. He clarified that the building height would probably be around 20 feet, well within the Zoning Ordinance maximum. He explained the proposed placement among the existing Carpenter buildings, and showed photographs for color comparisons. He explained the pedestrian access to River Road, proposing a partial relocation from the south side of the City’s North Reading Stormwater Pump Station to its north side, feeling it a better alignment with nearby crosswalks, less a conflict with Carpenter’s plant traffic, and a shortened length on Carpenter’s property, reducing their liability.

Mr. Miller asked about their plan to address the City Engineer’s concerns about encroachment on a shallow 9½-foot stormwater pipe. Mr. Morey said the footprint will be clear of the pipe, that they’re not reducing any of the existing cover, won’t have any heavy equipment loading it, and will place foundations below and outside of the pipe. He offered to discuss the concerns with the City Engineer, directly. Mr. Miller mentioned access concerns, in addition to structural ones. Mr. Morey thought he could alleviate them.

Mr. Miller hesitated in his recommendation on the pedestrian corridor relocation, never having traveled it himself. He felt it seemed a better alignment for everyone, and noted less time that would apparently be spent within the confines of the gates. Mr. Raffaelli wondered about its effect on plant security. Mr. Morey said it always has been a concern, recalling the agreement between the City and Carpenter, circa 1945. He said they’d prefer it not be their issue, but recognized the agreement and intended to continue honoring it. Mr. Raffaelli said conditions have changed, calling Carpenter a strategic industry. Mr. Lauter asked about the volume of use. Mr. Morey explained that Riverside-area residents walk or bicycle the path, some to access the Northwest Swimming Association’s pool. He said the entire length is monitored by video camera, and a guard must admit travelers through the turn-style gate.

Mr. Miller recommended the plan be tabled, pending the input of other regulating agencies. He further recommended granting the same five waivers concerning boundary and adjoining ownerships, as applied to the buildings 108 and 84 plans, recognizing the various property plans and inventories since provided by Carpenter. Mr. Morey hoped for some input on preferred color schemes, and the Commission’s interpretation of “public improvements”. He said Carpenter preferred to reconstruct the pedestrian corridor immediately, rather than posting an improvements agreement and escrow. Mr. Miller thought the City Engineer would prefer it that way, too, being his only perceived public improvement. Mr. Morey proposed colors similar to those used on Building 108 (a brown/tan palette).

Mr. Reppert moved to grant the same waivers, previously granted the buildings 108 and 84 proposals: §§22-402.4.F, -402.4.H, -402.4.K, -402.4.L.1, and -403.1.B. Mr. Lauter seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to grant the five waivers.

Mr. Lauter moved to table the final plan. Mr. Palka seconded. Mr. Morey clarified that he anticipated everything being in order in-time for consideration at the August meeting. And the Commission voted unanimously to table the Building 143 – Alloy Storage plan, pending the County Planning review and required revisions.

Mr. Lauter wondered if the Commission had given adequate direction regarding the pedestrian corridor relocation. He felt the proposal a viable alternative.

Review the **final** land development plan for the **Merner-Pfeiffer Hall of Science Renovation and Addition**, a proposed addition to the existing Merner-Pfeiffer Hall at that parcel known as 1601 North 13th Street. [0:39.11]

Mr. Sargent introduced his associates, and recalled the “New Science Center”, first proposed at the Commission’s November 2005 meeting. He said the College has since decided to change locations, preferring instead an addition to the existing Merner-Pfeiffer Hall, in a matching architectural style. He said the Hall originated in 1928, with a 1965 addition, 3 and 4 stories respectively. He said they’d be matching the 1965 addition, in terms of floor elevations, adding new science teaching labs, and renovating the existing building, once occupying the new. He estimated 40,000 square feet existing, and about 40,000 square feet proposed. He described a pitched roof, matching façade materials (granite base, brick exterior, slate-colored roofing), mechanicals hidden in an attic space, and a greenhouse facing the interior campus. He noted a possible astronomical observation deck on roof, and the necessary elevator override, shown on the elevation renderings. He measured 68 feet, from the average finished grade to the top of the elevator override, recognizing the variations in grade around the building.

Mr. Lauter thought the elevator override seemed oversized. Mr. Sargent agreed, but noted ADA-accessibility requirements, a 9-foot tall elevator car and the required clearance for maintenance space. He said they “tried to make it go away”, opting for the transparency of glass, and avoiding a height above the existing cupola. Mr. Miller asked what assessment of the roof determined its value for astronomical observation. Mr. Sargent said the astronomy/physics students currently use the “science field” on the ground. He said the Hall’s roof has an incredible view, being the highest point of the campus, blocked only toward the east by Mount Penn.

Ms. Mayfield asked about restrictions on access to the observation deck. Mr. Adams noted elevator lock-outs, by floor. Mr. Sargent said the elevator override wouldn’t be visible from Palm Street, noting also a screening wall for the ventilation ducts.

Mr. Reppert asked about access to the observation deck from the stair tower. Mr. Settle confirmed the secondary access. Mr. Reppert complimented the design, thinking the glass and metal treatment less intrusive, and sufficiently screened by sight lines.

Mr. Miller, still waiting on the County Planning comments, advised tabling the plan, per the Municipalities Planning Code. He asked about the status of the former Reading Armory (Noe-Equal Hosiery Company) building, noting the similarity of a July 9th letter from the College administration to representations made in 2006. Mr. Settle indicated that the Department of Environmental Protection has since granted the ‘release of liability’. Mr. Miller wondered how recently, and what else was in the way of its demolition. Mr. Sargent said the release was granted June 30th. Mr. Settle said the transfer between the City and the College is being reviewed by the City Solicitor.

Mr. Miller asked about a recent signage application, borrowed from the Zoning Administrator. Mr. Adams said they’re proposing a replacement of the metal and plastic sign at the intersection of North 13th and Rockland Streets, a more substantial and larger masonry installation.

Mr. Miller advised the College to prepare a municipal improvements estimate, for the extensive utility upgrades disturbing the public streets. Ms. Mayfield briefly explained the path to the formal agreement.

Mr. Miller asked if the Zoning Hearing Board had been presented with the same renderings, showing the accessory structures in the front yard. He considered it the bigger aesthetic concern. Mr. Sargent said the 1965 building has a “half-basement” and, with the additions of stone retaining wall, railing and landscaping, those structures should be completely hidden.

Mr. Reppert moved to grant the requested waiver on drawing scale. §22-402.1 requires plans at 50-scale. Albright provided plans at 30-scale. Mr. Lauter seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to waive §22-402.1.

Mr. Reppert moved to table the final plan, pending receipt of Berks County Planning Commission’s review. Mr. Lauter seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to table the Merner-Pfeiffer Hall of Science Renovation and Addition plan.

Review the **final** land development plan for the **Reading Eagle Company – Addition for New Press and Operations**, a proposed addition to the newspaper production facility on those parcels known as 317-339 Penn Street. [1:13.34]

Mr. Hill introduced his associates, and described the existing site conditions, including the “Bridge Room” and the WFMZ-TV studio. He said the proposed land development will make room for a “state-of-the-art” press, and consolidate the Reading Eagle’s mailroom and circulation departments from their current location at South Second and Chestnut Streets. He said they’ve negotiated the transfer of the parking lot (317 Penn) from the City, for additional space. He described new shipping and receiving areas, a rebuilding of the Penn Street façade, and some interior alterations. He explained the new press hall, and large windows, allowing views of the multi-story press in operation. He indicated two additional loading docks, improved truck access and a new lower level receiving area (for roll paper), a paper storage area, ventilation shafts, emergency generators, and an underground fuel tank to power them. He said they’d remove the old press, and build new employee locker rooms. The second floor, a mezzanine level, will house the control rooms. Mechanical air handling equipment, compressors and chillers will be installed on floors above.

Mr. Hill stressed their need to keep a daily newspaper in operation throughout a carefully-phased construction. He turned to the comments received from Planning Office, addressing two in particular. He said green roof construction was briefly considered, but determined impractical. He said they are designing a reflective roof, to minimize the ‘urban heat island’ effect. He said a mid-block pedestrian connection is not possible, having used the full width of property for the truck docks designed. Mr. Miller asked if there’d be any fenestration on the west elevation, or railings protecting the loading well. Mr. Hill answered yes to the railing, but hadn’t planned any windows. Mr. Quaintance noted the west side is technically a *party* wall. Mr. Miller noted that nothing stops pedestrians from passing between the buildings now, or after development. He felt, given the Eagle’s operating hours, and visibility at night, they might consider the interaction on that side as they have for Penn Street. Mr. Quaintance agreed that such a corridor would be beneficial. He added that the Penn Street entrance will become a much more “public” entrance, after the planned renovations.

Mr. Raffaelli asked about glazing planned for the press room. Mr. Hill mentioned low-emissivity windows, with either green or blue coloration. Mr. Raffaelli asked about structural considerations. Mr. Hill said the press hall must be climate-controlled at the time the press is delivered. He said the window designs are not finalized, but taking thermal protections and structural integrity into consideration. Mr. Palka asked for dimensions. Mr. Quaintance answered 16-feet in width, 40-feet in height. Mr. Reppert asked about exterior materials. Mr. Hill, noting the green glazed brick on the existing building, expected that they’d cover it. He said they considered preserving it, but preferred a unified look for the whole. He said they were investigating pre-cast concrete panels or another masonry covering over the steel structure, the colors yet to be decided. Mr. Reppert thought the green brick dated, looking forward to a new façade for Penn Street. Mr. Quaintance considered the existing brick a liability to the seasonal freeze/thaw cycles. Mr. Lauter advised consideration of the adjacent historic structures. He suggested seeking the Historical Architectural Review Board’s input, realizing the location was not in a regulated district. Mr. Hill said the design was not yet final, open to additional suggestions.

Mr. Miller questioned the building coverage. Mr. Hill measured 86% coverage; 6% over the Penn Square district’s permitted maximum. He said a meeting with the Zoning Administrator had been arranged to discuss their options. Mr. Mohn indicated that he’d be able to satisfactorily address the remaining Planning Office comments, still requesting a waiver on plan scale. Mr. Miller said until the County Planning comments are received, and the zoning issues settled, he had to recommend the plan be tabled. He said a municipal improvements agreement would be required for the utility, curb and sidewalk disturbances.

Mr. Lauter appreciated the Reading Eagle’s continuing presences and investment downtown, and moved to grant the waiver on plan scale, allowing 30-scale, in lieu of 50. Mr. Palka seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to waive §22-402.1.

Mr. Lauter moved to table the final plan. Mr. Palka seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to table the Reading Eagle Company’s Addition plan.

Review the **parking lot** land development plan for the **Fleetwood Parking Lot**, off-street parking proposed at that parcel known as 105 Chestnut Street (formerly the Fleetwood Industries, Inc. property). [1:46.43]

Mr. Deller introduced the Reading Area Community College representation, in attendance. He described the location within the greater campus and the neighboring Oritsky Lot. He reported the demolition of the Fleetwood property is nearly complete, proposing an expansion of the surface parking from the north. He indicated two access drives from the vacated Chestnut Street, and others through the existing Oritsky lot. He measured a reduction in impervious coverage, from 92% to 75%, and a net parking gain of over 150 spaces.

Mr. Deller anticipated resolving the Planning Office comments easily, save for the setback issues identified. Mr. Miller asked if they’d be preparing new legal descriptions annexing the Oritsky parcel and the

vacated Chestnut Street. Mr. Deller, still seeking the documentation proving the status of Chestnut Street, alluded to references within the current deed to a “vacated” Chestnut as a portion of the Fleetwood property. Mr. Miller offered his assistance in researching the issue. He said a new description would, by definition, make a side yard from a front yard. He suggested the College approach the neighbor south, regarding their use of/intentions for the street.

Mr. Miller asked if they had received the City Engineer’s review. Mr. Deller said not, having only the Planning Office comments. Mr. Miller paraphrased the request for calculations of stormwater flows, and justification for proposed control measures. He suggested “bio-retention” designs be considered for the proposed infiltration trenches. Mr. Deller observed the overall reduction in impervious cover, considering infiltration trenches a bonus. He remained open to other design preferences. Mr. Miller noted some local subsurface characteristics that make other management practices preferable.

Mr. Miller said a municipal improvements agreement would be required for the storm sewer connections. He asked about the fate of the mature street trees on South Second Street. Mr. Keegan intended some maintenance trimming. Mr. Miller reminded that is a permitted activity. Ms. Mayfield briefly explained the improvements agreement process

Mr. Miller requested a copy of the College’s recent “Campus Master Plan” for the Planning Office records. Mr. Bassano handed one over. He called it “conceptual”, showing the College’s development in a southern direction. He pegged the Fleetwood site for a possible future academic building, with no dates or timeframes committed. He said the Board of Trustees adopted the Plan October 1st.

Mr. Reppert moved to table the parking lot plan, pending receipt of Berks County Planning Commission’s review. Mr. Palka seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to table the Fleetwood Parking Lot plan.

Review the **record** land development plan for **Big Spring Inc./Berkshire Bottling LLC**, a water bottling plant proposed for those parcels known as 600-760 Clinton Street, the Riverfront Commerce Center. [2:49.36]

Following an executive session, held to discuss the matter under the auspices of Section 8(a)(4) of the Sunshine Act, Mr. Reppert moved to grant the requested waiver from the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance regulating street names, to permit that road formerly known as “Opportunity Drive” to be renamed as “Berkshire Place”, on the condition that the property itself be assigned a number consistent with its location in the 700-800 blocks. Mr. Lauter seconded. And the Commission voted 3 to 1 to waive §22-502.9.B, Mr. Raffaelli casting the dissent.

Review the **final** land development plan for **Hydrojet, Inc. Subdivision and Land Development Plans**, a proposed subdivision and an industrial building for precision machining services at that parcel known as 466 Tulpehocken Street (Parcel 2 of the “Buttonwood Gateway”). [2:52.20]

Mr. Bogia recalled two particular issues preventing approval at the June meeting; the final architectural design and the looping water line, recommended for fire protections. He said BCM Engineers, Inc., consulting engineers to the Reading Area Water Authority, has since documented their desire for the loop, and Hydrojet has agreed to the installation.

Mr. Keffer, referring to the architectural renderings, said painted horizontal stripes have been added to the metal paneling on three sides of the production area, in an aqua color, and a company logo added to the wall at the main entrance. He said the “future expansion” (west) wall would not be painted.

Ms. Mayfield said she recently spoke with the developer’s attorney, Socrates J. Georgeadis, regarding the finalized municipal improvements agreement. Mr. Miller expected that security to be limited to the cost of the water line, all other ‘public’ improvements being installed as part of the Sun Rich Fresh Foods development. Mr. Bogia thought it would be handled under the agreement with the Water Authority.

Mr. Miller reminded that design waivers would be required, if ever Gateway Drive were offered for dedication, naming the cul-de-sac and sidewalk as examples. He said that wasn’t Hydrojet’s burden alone.

Mr. Lauter expressed his appreciation for the additional architectural efforts, thinking the striping a relatively easy solution and better than the translucent plastic elements suggested in June.

Mr. Miller asked if there were reasons the stormwater swale to the north (Swale 1) couldn’t be designed as bio-retention area. Mr. Bogia cited proximity to the building foundation.

Mr. Reppert moved to grant a conditional final approval, subject to satisfying the remaining Planning Office review comments, those of the City Engineer, and showing the water loop, as requested by BCM Engineers, Inc. Mr. Palka seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to approve the Hydrojet, Inc. final plan.

Resolution #38-2007

Mr. Raffaelli called Hydrojet's proposed development "exemplary", recalling the original intent to open several similarly-scaled facilities on the former Dana Corporation rail yard (the Riverfront Commerce Center). He regretted the missed opportunity at economic diversity and jobs creation.

Review the **final** 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. [3:03.23]

Mr. Bogia described an expansion to the existing facility; 10,000 square feet on the south elevation, and another 1,960 on the east. He said they've removed the planned stormwater infiltration, proposing instead a Terre Kleen™ clarification unit. He said they're considering additional architectural enhancements, possible banding in the masonry and an overhang/soffit element around the office area. The building additions will be split-faced block.

Mr. Miller asked about the status of the petition to vacate Madison Avenue. Mr. Koch said documents have been prepared, but are waiting on the formal consent of the United States Postal Service. He said the City Solicitor has already approved the process and documentation. Mr. Miller said, until formalized, he'd recommend the Commission table the plan. He added that the City Engineer has been critical of the frequent 'criss-crossing' of the lines in the utility layout.

Mr. Bogia raised two issues with the City Engineer's review. He hoped the sewage planning module process would be waived, projecting a reduction in the overall water usage. He said no sampling manholes were necessary, not perceiving any industrial discharges.

Mr. Miller noted several corrections made in response to his June review. He recommended the plan be tabled, pending the resolution of Madison Avenue's status and the relation with the Postal Service. He advised the Commission take the opportunity to forward its opinions and concerns, regarding Madison Avenue, to City Council. He personally perceived no practical use of the street beyond the needs of the two adjoining property owners. He asked about the revised legal description describing the whole property, after annexations. Mr. Koch said there might be some financing complications delaying that, in part from the unusual transfer from the Postal Service (simply forfeiting their interest in Madison Avenue, and without actually conveying a deed).

Mr. Lauter moved to recommend that City Council vacate the 1900 block of Madison Avenue. Mr. Palka seconded. And the Commission agreed unanimously to forward the recommendation.

Resolution #39-2007

Mr. Palka moved to table the final plan. Mr. Lauter seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to table the Birchcraft Kitchens plan.

Other business:

Minutes: [3:22.49]

Mr. Palka moved to accept the June 12, 2007 meeting minutes, as presented. Mr. Reppert seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to approve the June 12th minutes.

Resolution #40-2007

Mr. Raffaelli criticized the mural, installed without any permits at the corner of South Fifth and Court Streets on the Sovereign Plaza building, as yet another example of circumventing established and known City processes. He said the Historical Architectural Review Board will be addressing the matter with regard to the Callowhill Historic District.

Ms. Mayfield, responding to a previous request from the Chair, reported that enforcement action will be taken on the Mimmo's Restaurant and Pizzeria zoning violation (290 Morgantown Road/15 Prospect Avenue), if and when it is determined that no appeals have been taken.

Mr. Lauter, recalling the reaction of the City Engineer upon learning the Planning Commission's role in approving modifications to public parks and grounds, suggested the Commission may need to formally communicate those requirements to incoming City employees having oversight. Mr. Miller asked if the Angelica Park environmental center design had ever been presented, thinking it an especially obvious example. He suspected a more 'institutional' aversion to the Commission's participation. Mr. Raffaelli noted administratively-authorized

changes to record land development plans circumventing the Commission, specifying the additional curb cuts at the Second and Washington Streets Parking Structure, installed before the Commission had a chance to object. Mr. Miller conceded the change should have effected a revision plan. He recognized a widespread misconception about the privileges and powers reserved by the Commission, noting that even RiverPlace Development Corporation continues to view its presentations as mere courtesy. He assumed they had been misguided by other officials of the administration. Mr. Lauter suggested a letter from the Commission. Mr. Miller offered to draft it, claiming a reliance on Pennsylvania statute, as opposed to City ordinance. Mr. Lauter cautioned against holding developers to a process bypassed by the City government. Mr. Miller suggested that such reviews are where the Commission's input counts most, frustrated by the usual resistance to the Commission's design recommendations in the land development process. He said limitations in the law and ordinance reduce the Commission's opinions on architecture and design to little more than "constructive criticisms". He said those issues most influenced by the Commission are increasingly being delegated to specialized agencies, but reserved the design and use of public grounds and comprehensive planning initiatives as bona fide Planning Commission activities. He said, as his reviews continue to evolve, he's more likely to formally assert some of those options available to the Commission. Mr. Palka recalled Reading's previous 'commission form' of government, where single elected officials had routinely given permissions without consulting anyone. Mr. Miller explained that, at an on-site meeting (February 1, 2007) representatives of Cairone & Kaupp, Inc. (the firm retained to design the replacement playground equipment where stood the Kiddie Kastle), had promised a presentation to the Commission, and never delivered. He assumed this to be at the direction of other City officials.

Mr. Lauter moved direct the Planning Office staff to draft a letter, to be reviewed by the Commission, expressing the Commission's concerns regarding the review process for uses/development of public property. Mr. Raffaelli seconded. And the Commission unanimously sanctioned the preparation of said letter.

Resolution #41-2007

Mr. Palka moved to adjourn the July meeting. Mr. Lauter seconded. And the Commission agreed unanimously to adjourn the July meeting, 4 to 0. – 10:47 pm.