

Borough of West Reading
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

November 13, 2023

Committee Members Present

Philip Wert, Chair	Heidi Reuter
Dean Murray, Borough Manager	Robin Horman
Mark Ratcliffe, WRCRF Manager	Chad Moyer
Aaron Gantz	

Staff Present

Stephanie Burkholder

Visitors Present

There were no visitors.

Call to Order

Mr. Wert called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Approval of the Minutes

Motion made by Mr. Ratcliffe and seconded by Mrs. Horman to approve the minutes of September 11, 2023 meeting. Motion carried.

Residential Properties Update

Mr. Wert stated that approximately 10-15 homes are selling per month and the sale price of new homes is still increasing. Mrs. Horman asked about Franklin Manor apartments and what was going on with the property. Mr. Moyer stated that since the new owners have taken over they have been working on improving things within the building.

West Reading Commercial Properties Update

- 400 Penn – Winnie Mochi, slated to open in Spring 2024.
- 416 Penn – The Motor Club is now open.
- 433 Penn – Schweitzer’s Service Center. No further information available.
- 438 Penn – Prime Tobacco Zone is now open.
- 450 Penn – Vivi Bubble Tea, opening to be determined.
- 525 Penn – Legacy Cigar Lounge is now open.
- 530 Penn – Zerbe Photography is now open.
- 719 Penn (upper floor) – A Light in the Attic Modern Speakeasy, just opened.

Strategic Planning Discussion

- Wyomissing Report – Mr. Wert advised that there’s a plan to possibly build apartments at the Berkshire Family Restaurant. There’s pad site development at the Berkshire Mall which will be discussed at the next meeting. Mr. Moyer advised that there had been property maintenance issues at the mall due to the upkeep.

Strategic Planning Next Steps

1. Shopping Center Update – New doors have been put on the outside of the businesses along with accent lighting.
2. Design Standards – Mr. Wert advised that the Planning Commission is still meeting with Derck & Edson, and they've been working on new ideas involving the possibility of moving or adding zoning districts. There were discussions about what future improvements were envisioned along Reading Avenue and Buttonwood Street.
3. BID Update – There was discussion regarding Mark's retirement and replacement. No action was taken.

Old/New Business

Railroad Bridge – There was no discussion.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Burkholder
Administrative Clerk