

City of Reading  
PLANNING COMMISSION



2010  
ANNUAL REPORT



# CITY OF READING, PENNSYLVANIA

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PLANNING COMMISSION  
815 WASHINGTON STREET  
READING, PA 19601-3690  
(610) 655-6443

March 1, 2011

Vaughn D. Spencer, President  
City Council  
Room 2-24, City Hall  
815 Washington Street  
Reading, PA 19601-3690

Dear President and members of City Council:

In accord with the provisions of the *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code* (Act 247 of 1968, as reenacted and amended), the City of Reading Planning Commission respectfully submits its Annual Report for 2010. The Report outlines the Commission's activities throughout the year.

The Planning Commission will continue to administer the City's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, and those other functions delegated to it, in an effort to improve the quality of life in the City of Reading.

Sincerely,

Andrew W. Miller  
Planning Office



## **SUMMARY**

Section 207 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires the Planning Commission (the municipal planning agency) to keep a full record of its business and submit an annual, written report of those activities to City Council (the governing body), by March 1st of the following year.

The City of Reading Planning Commission held eleven (11) regular monthly business meetings in 2010. The meetings generally convened on the fourth Tuesdays of each month. A work session convened on March 9th, to discuss a newly-proposed zoning ordinance with the authoring consultant. A special meeting, originally scheduled for June 3rd, a public hearing on the draft zoning ordinance, was cancelled for a lack of quorum and rescheduled as part of the June 22nd meeting. The August 24th meeting, short a quorum, reconvened on August 31st. The scheduled September 28th meeting never convened for a lack of quorum. The July, August, October and November meetings were held in City Council's Chambers, in an attempt to cover and document the meetings with the recently-installed Granicus Inc. 'webcasting service'. Technical difficulties in its operation, complaints about the acoustics and layout of the Chambers, and a decision to eventually install the same equipment in the Penn Room, ultimately resulted in the Planning Commission relocating to its original venue. The complete record of the Commission's regular meeting activity is logged in the official written minutes, on file in the Planning and City Council offices. Additionally, recordings of each meeting have been catalogued in digital audio (.wma) format.

This report was reviewed, and approved for its general content by the Planning Commission at its February 22, 2011 meeting (resolution #22-2011).

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Written reviews, identifying defects and corrections required by the Zoning and Subdivision/Land Development ordinances, as well as the suggestions and opinions of the Planning Office staff, were prepared by the Planning Office and sent (typically by electronic mail) in response to all qualified applications for subdivision and land development. Certified copies of approved and recorded plans are on-file in the Planning Office.

## **SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT**

The Planning Commission's primary role continues to be the administration and enforcement of the City's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (Chapter 22 of the "Codified Ordinances"). What follows is a list and brief summary of the proposals brought before the Commission in 2010, organized chronologically and by category. Only those proposals having satisfied the preliminary planning requirements, at a minimum, have been included. For an exhaustive listing of all business brought before the Commission, including proposals in the 'sketch' phase and any since withdrawn, see the "2010 Activity Summary", attached, or the meeting minutes, on-file.

### **COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL**

#### **Barley Square – final subdivision and land development plans**

On this site of the former Garden State Tanning plant, Tripoint Properties Inc. has re-divided three separate parcels as two, and proposed an apartment building and several retail spaces for its part facing South 2nd Street. They sold the South 3rd Street-facing portion to Berks Women in Crisis who is undertaking its new headquarters, shelter and transitional housing center. The plan, first submitted for the Planning Commission's review in January 2008, was delayed by Tripoint's search for a new partner after Legacy Brewing Company, who had initially proposed a brewery (hence the plan's name), backed out. The final plan, in its final configuration, was approved on May 25th (resolution #27-2010). That approval was reaffirmed in January 25, 2011 (resolution #17-2011), and is on-record with the Berks County Recorder of Deeds; Instrument No. 2011004227. Demolition of the shuttered tannery building is nearly complete. The contractor continues to process and remove the debris.

#### **DoubleTree Hotel & Garage Project – revision to record land development plan**

Originally approved in May 2009 (resolution #33-2009), a revised plan was submitted in September enlarging the footprint of the Hotel on that parcel known as 701 Penn Street. The 927-space garage on the Court Street side of the subdivision is complete and opened August 31st as the "DoubleTree Garage". The Hotel construction is expected to

commence sometime during 2011. The revision was approved October 26th (resolution #46-2010), and is on-record with the Berks County Recorder of Deeds; Instrument No. 2010048051.

Oley Street Retail Center – final subdivision/land development plan

This project, originally filed in January 2008 as “Shuman Development Group – Buildings #8 and #9”, proposed a 14,742-square foot grocery store and a 9,100-square foot retail space on one parcel combined from those formerly known as 623 North 8th and 810 Oley Streets. The site had previously served as surface parking for the surrounding “outlet” buildings. The final plan was approved on March 27th (resolution #19-2010), but not recorded until January 31, 2011. Work began in November, before being stopped by the Department of Public Works. Eventually, the plan was reaffirmed December 28th (resolution #68-2010), and is on-record with the Berks County Recorder of Deeds; Instrument No. 2011004314. Work continues, with the steel superstructure in place.

Quaker Maid Parking and Trailer Storage – final annexation and land development plan

Following a zoning map change, enacted August 24th for those parcels known as 513-533 Crestmont and 512-524 Arlington Streets (Bill No. 43-2010), approval was granted January 25, 2011 (resolution #1-2011) for the employee parking lot and trailer storage proposed. First submitted, and partially constructed in January, the remainder of the year was spent addressing the zoning and other permitting issues. The plan has yet to be recorded, as of this writing.

R&D Building Addition (Sweet Street Desserts) – final land development plan

Submitted in April, this plan proposed a 4,388-square foot expansion of the baking facility at 722 Hiesters Lane. Approval was granted May 25th (resolution #28-2010). The plan is on-record with the Berks County Recorder of Deeds; Instrument No. 2010021912. Construction is nearly complete.

Victor Emmanuel Parking & Banquet Hall Addition – final annexation and land development plan

Proposing the reconstruction of 92 off-street parking spaces and other improvements, several stormwater management-related, this plan for 301-319 Hazel Street and 229 Morgantown Road was first submitted in June as a more-ambitious expansion of the restaurant (hence the plan’s title). The final version was approved October 26th (resolution #50-2010). It has yet to be recorded. Section 513.a of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires developers to record their plans (with the county recorder of deeds) within ninety (90) days of final approval.

Lancaster Avenue Super Market – final annexation and land development plan

This plan proposes the consolidation of 413 and 425 Lancaster Avenue and construction of a Bottom Dollar Food grocery store thereon. Demolition of the former A.W. Golden/Masano automobile dealership buildings is imminent. First submitted in September, the plan was granted *preliminary* approval November 23rd (resolution #53-2010). Final approval has been withheld pending the requisite approvals the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (for ‘highway occupancy’) and the Berks County Conservation District (for the erosion and sedimentation control plan).

**RESIDENTIAL**

Lands of Munzer Yacoub – final subdivision plan

First granted final approval in March of 2008 (resolution #24-2008) and reaffirmed in November of 2009 (resolution #58-2009), approval was again reaffirmed April 27th (resolution #24-2010). This plan proposed a three-lot subdivision and three townhouses on an empty parcel in the 600 block of Linden Street. The final plan has yet to be recorded; likewise the deeds. Section 513.a of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires developers to record their plans (with the county recorder of deeds) within ninety (90) days of final approval.

Acevedo Downing St. Subdivision – final subdivision plan

Norberto and Alicia Acevedo first proposed this subdivision of 2316 Downing Street in September, with the intent of building a second, neighboring house for their daughter. Approval has been delayed pending additional information and testing of the necessary on-lot sewage disposal, and resolution of encroachments by his neighbor to the south. Formal extensions of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code time limits have been granted by the applicant in order to further investigate the sewage disposal issue.

**INSTITUTIONAL & UTILITY**

Play Lot at Grace and Pansy Streets (Reading School District) – final land development plan

This plan, proposing a new playground and paved parking lot on the currently-stone parking area at 412 Pansy Street, was first submitted in September of 2008 and granted final approval in May of 2009 (resolution #28-2009). The project was halted in favor of other School District projects taking priority. The School District resubmitted the plan October 12th, this time as the record owner, having purchased the property from the 18th Ward Democratic Club of Reading, instead of the long-term lease previously arranged. That plan, with some other minor alterations, was approved October 26th (resolution #49-2010), and is on-record with the Berks County Recorder of Deeds; Instrument No. 2011001585). Construction has yet to begin.

2nd Street Learning Center (Opportunity House) – final annexation and land development plan

This plan, first submitted in December 2009 for an educational facility and day care on those parcels bounded by East Lafayette, Beech, Pear and North 2nd Streets and an off-street parking area on 406-444 Pear Street, was granted final approval March 23rd (resolution #16-2010). Construction of the building is nearly complete. The final plan was never recorded. And the site remains as 41 separate parcels. Section 513.a of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires developers to record their plans (with the county recorder of deeds) within ninety (90) days of final approval.

First Energy Stadium Renovation & Addition – final land development plan

A plan for the renovation and expansion of the City-owned baseball stadium at 2000 Centre Avenue, was first submitted May 11th, and granted final approval June 22nd (resolution #33-2010). The \$10 million project is well underway, and expected to be finished in-time for the scheduled April 14th home opener against the Akron Aeros. The final plan was never recorded. Section 513.a of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires developers to record their plans (with the county recorder of deeds) within ninety (90) days of final approval.

GoggleWorks Parking Lot – annexation and parking lot land development plan

A plan for 75 additional off-street parking spaces in the 100 blocks of Thorn and North 3rd Streets was submitted for the GoggleWorks Center for the Arts on June 8th. The plan was denied August 31st (resolution #42-2010), as the applicant declined to respond to the Planning Office's request for corrections and eventually put the Planning Commission up against the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code's statutory limit on review time. An *interim* executive director later explained that a transition in leadership and an effort at cost containment made them reconsider the project. The site remains a gravel lot, leftover from the homes demolished, and appears to be used for parking anyway.

Sylvania Homes II: Accessible Housing (Reading Housing Authority) – preliminary subdivision and land development plan

This plan, for a three-lot annexation/subdivision and five garden apartments at 1001 Liggett Avenue (and incorporating 427 Margaret Street and the unopened 1300 block of Sheridan Street), has been under the Planning Commission's review since it was first submitted June 28th. Action on the plan has been delayed pending a petition to vacate the unopened block of Sheridan Street bordering the west. Two 90-day extensions have already been granted. City Council is expected to act on that petition on March 14, 2011.

Additions and Renovations: Amanda Stout Elementary School and Benners Court – final subdivision and land development plan

This plan for the renovation and expansion of the Amanda E. Stout Elementary School at 301 South 10th Street (and to include those parcels heretofore known as 1035-1061 and 1034-1060 of the vacated Benners Court), includes a 29-to-1-lot consolidation. First submitted July 9th, the plan was granted final approval at the January 25, 2011 meeting (resolution #2-2011). The affected sections of Benners Court and Maple Street required vacating by action of City Council on August 9th (Bill No. 54-2010). To date, the only activity appears to be the removal of the large Sycamore trees fronting the existing school, reportedly for use in new cabinetry for the planned classrooms.

First Energy Stadium Parking Lot – parking lot land development plan

This plan proposed 192 surface parking spaces at 101 Cathedral Street, on the site of the former Northwest Swimming Association's pool, to be developed and used in conjunction with the Carpenter Technology Corporation (its current owner). First submitted July 13th, the plan was approved August 31st (resolution #41-2010). Excavation is underway. The plan was never recorded. Section 513.a of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning

Code requires developers to record their plans (with the county recorder of deeds) within ninety (90) days of final approval.

### **Modifications**

Section 512.1.d of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires the Planning Commission to keep a written record of all action on all requests for modification/waiver of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. Those waivers formally granted are summarized in this report, but further explained and notated in the meeting minutes and on the plan title sheets themselves.

## **ZONING**

### **Conditional Uses**

Sections 603.c.2 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code and 27-301.B.3 of the City's Zoning Ordinance (27-301.2.C, prior to the July 26th adoption of the new Zoning Ordinance) give the Planning Commission an opportunity to comment on any applications for "conditional uses" as classified by the Zoning Ordinance. There were twelve (12) such applications reviewed in 2010.

#### **1041 Penn Street - §603.c.2 conditional use review (conversion)**

On January 26th, the Planning Commission considered, but declined to communicate any recommendation on this application, noting that City Council had already held its hearing and the Planning Office's inability to verify compliance from the materials provided. The Planning Office failed to include the review with the December 22, 2009 agenda, and so missed an opportunity for review prior to Council's January 10th hearing. Council ultimately denied the application on February 22nd (their Resolution #24-2010).

#### **226 West Oley Street - §603.c.2 conditional use review (conversion)**

On February 23rd, the Planning Commission recommended City Council's denial (resolution #11-2010) of this proposed three-unit dwelling, based on an incomplete application and the deficiency of off-street parking. Council held its hearing on March 10th, continued it to March 31st, and ultimately denied the application April 26th (their Resolution #41-2010).

#### **549 North 10th Street - §603.c.2 conditional use review (conversion)**

On March 23rd, the Planning Commission recommended City Council's approval (resolution #17-2010), based on what appeared to be a complete and compliant application and a sufficient number of off-street parking spaces, for the residential part of the property at least. Additional detail and clarifications were realized at City Council's March 31st hearing; a total of 6 apartments, as opposed to four represented to the Commission, and an expansion of the first-floor restaurant. Neighbors attended, and complained of the lack of available parking in the neighborhood. Council ultimately denied the application April 26th (their Resolution #42-2010).

#### **430 Elm Street - §603.c.2 conditional use review (residential care facility)**

On April 27th, the Planning Commission recommended City Council's denial (resolution #20-2010) of a proposed 'supervised release' facility, because of its failure to meet the minimum standards set forth in the Zoning Ordinance (specifically, parts 8 and 12). Council held its hearing April 28th, and ultimately denied the application May 24th (their Resolution #60-2010).

#### **315 North 6th Street - §603.c.2 conditional use review (residential care facility)**

Also at the April 27th meeting, the Planning Commission similarly recommended City Council's denial (resolution #21-2010) of this 'supervised release' facility, because of its failure to meet the minimum standards set forth in the Zoning Ordinance (specifically, parts 8 and 12). Council held its hearing April 28th, and ultimately denied the application May 24th (their Resolution #60-2010), as part of the same action covering 430 Elm Street.

#### **335 North 11th Street - §603.c.2 conditional use review (conversion)**

On April 27th, the Planning Commission recommended City Council's denial (resolution #22-2010) of this two-unit seeking a third, based on its failure to meet the minimum off-street parking standard required by the Zoning Ordinance. Council held its hearing April 28th, and ultimately denied the application May 24th (their Resolution #59-2010).

501 South 19th Street - §603.c.2 conditional use review (public utility)

On July 27th, the Planning Commission recommended City Council's approval (resolution #37-2010) for the Pennsylvania-American Water Company's "Woodvale Pump Station", subject to the resolution of any outstanding zoning issues, their meeting the access needs of the City Fire Marshal and County 'hazmat' responders, and that they preserve the facility's outwardly-residential appearance. A proposed interior modification to this long-operating pump station revealed that it had never been granted a zoning permit in the first place. Council held its hearing on August 24th, and ultimately approved the application September 13th (their Resolution #83-2010).

117 South 3rd Street - §603.c.2 conditional use review (conversion)

On August 31st, the Planning Commission recommended that City Council give further consideration (resolution #43-2010) of the issues raised by the Planning Office, namely the availability of the off-street parking arranged and its continued and enforced use. The members recognized the efforts of the owner to preserve the property and the need to give some permission for its multi-family use. Council held its hearing on September 22nd, and ultimately approved the application October 11th (their Resolution #99-2010).

245 South 4th Street - §603.c.2 conditional use review (conversion)

On December 28th, the Planning Commission recommended City Council's denial (resolution #64-2010), based on its lack of a permit history, an incomplete application and inadequate off-street parking. Council had already held its hearing held December 21st, but held the record held open for the Commission's comment. Council ultimately denied the application on January 10, 2011 (their Resolution #4-2011).

1051 Chestnut Street - §603.c.2 conditional use review (conversion)

On December 28th, the Planning Commission recommended City Council's approval of the conversion as an 'existing condition', and without requiring added parking (resolution #65-2010), based on a lengthy record of housing permits. Council had held its hearing held December 21st. Council ultimately approved the application on January 24, 2011 (their Resolution #14-2011), with the condition that they construct parking in the rear yard after seeking the necessary variances from the Zoning Hearing Board.

143 South 12th Street - §603.c.2 conditional use review (conversion)

On December 28th, the Planning Commission recommended City Council's denial (resolution #66-2010), unless its history as a two-unit dwelling was established, and local parking issues were addressed. Council held its hearing on January 25, 2011, but has yet to resolve its decision as of this writing.

1207 North 10th Street - §603.c.2 conditional use review (conversion)

On December 28th, the Planning Commission recommended City Council's approval (resolution #67-2010) based on the historical evidence of two units since 1998. Council held its hearing on January 25, 2011, but has yet to resolve its decision as of this writing.

**Zoning Ordinance Amendments / Zoning Map Changes**

Section 609.c of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code gives the Planning Commission a 30-day period in which to comment on proposed zoning ordinance amendments and/or map changes. There were three (3) such proposals considered by the Commission during 2010. (see also: "2010 Zoning Ordinance" under the OTHER BUSINESS section)

the "petition to rezone 706R Lehigh Street, R1 to CH" - §609 zoning map change review

On February 23rd, the Planning Commission reviewed the application of Berkshire Greens, Inc. to rezone this property from its Residential 1 (R1) classification to Commercial Highway (CH), for the purpose of constructing a billboard. The matter took on some urgency in the fall of 2009, when neighbors reacted to the preparatory-removal of vegetation that had long served as a buffer between their back yards and the Warren Street Bypass. The Commission recommended against the rezoning (resolution #10-2010), recognizing a potential "spot zoning" in addition to the nearly-unanimous opposition to the sign. The County Planning Commission noted the same in its March 9th review. A public hearing was held March 10th. And City Council subsequently denied the map change on March 22nd (their Resolution #32-2010).

the “petition to rezone 513-523 Crestmont and 512-524 Arlington Streets, R2 to MC” - §609 zoning map change review

On May 25th, and again July 27th, the Planning Commission considered the request of Quaker Maid Meats, Inc. to incorporate the subject properties from the Residential 2 (R2) classification to the adjacent Manufacturing-Commercial (MC) status. Quaker Maid had since demolished the existing homes thereon, and intended additional off-street employee parking and an area for staging of tractor trailers. Excavation and the installation of light-standard bases were already well-underway in January. Quaker Maid intends to leave the trailer-parking part of the site unpaved, anticipating that they will eventually expend the plan in that direction. In each review, the Commission gave a favorable recommendation for the rezoning (resolutions ##29- and 36-2010 respectively). Council enacted the map change on August 24th (Bill No. 43-2010).

the “clarifications, corrections and additions to the 2010 Zoning Ordinance” amendment - §609 zoning amendment review

On December 28th, the Commission reviewed a summary of an ordinance that would edit mistakes and oversights found in the newly-adopted Zoning Ordinance. Additionally, new rules for the Residential 1 (R1) districts setting minimum house sizes, restrictions on the placement of septic-system mounds, and additional regulation of day-care operations were included. The Commission gave its consent to the amending legislation (resolution #63-2010). Council passed the amending ordinance February 14, 2011 (Bill No. 8-2011).

## **REDEVELOPMENT**

Blighted Property Review Committee – recommendations for reuse

In 2010, the Planning Commission continued in its advisory role to the Blighted Property Review Committee and Redevelopment Authority, suggesting the preferred reuse of properties certified as blighted by the Review Committee. The Commission’s input is a required step in the Review Committee’s procedure, per the enabling statute, and its recommendation must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance. On January 26th, the Commission made recommendations for three (3) properties left over from the first ‘batch’ of twelve (12) such properties so certified (from a September 17, 2009 certification hearing). Most of the rest had already been considered at the November 24, 2009 meeting.

- 212 South 8th Street – recommended “manufacturing-commercial” uses (resolution #4-2010)
- 228 North 2nd Street – recommended “residential” uses (resolution #5-2010)
- 210 North Front Street – recommended “residential” uses (resolution #6-2010)

Recommendations for 157 North Front Street and 153 Walnut Street were withheld pending additional investigation. And on December 28th, consideration of the Review Committee’s second group of eight (8) more certified properties (from a November 18th certification hearing) was undertaken by the Planning Commission.

- 217 North 2nd Street – recommended a “qualified R3” use (resolution #55-2010)
- 243 North 4th Street – recommended a “qualified R3” use (resolution #56-2010)
- 517 North 4th Street – recommended a “residential” reuse (resolution #57-2010)
- 1237 Buttonwood Street – recommended a “qualified R3” use (resolution #58-2010)
- 161 Clymer Street – recommended a “residential” reuse (resolution #59-2010)
- 146 Elm Street – recommended a “residential” reuse (resolution #60-2010)
- 153 Elm Street – recommended a “residential” reuse (resolution #61-2010)
- 305 Locust Street – recommended a “qualified R3” use (resolution #62-2010)

Additional, and more authoritative detail of each property, and the *findings* of blight, may be found in the Review Committee’s certification hearing transcripts.

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING**

Section 303 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires the Planning Commission to review certain public actions as they relate to policies set forth in its Comprehensive Plan. The following entries detail the extent to which such review opportunities were given.

**STREETS & PUBLIC GROUNDS** per Section 303.a.1

the “petition to vacate Benners Court and the 300 block of Maple Street” - §303.a.1 review

On February 23rd, and again July 27th, the Planning Commission considered changes in the public street topography related to the “Additions and Renovations: Amanda Stout Elementary School and Benners Court” project. In each case, the Commission recommended (resolutions ##12- and 38-2010 respectively) City Council act to vacate the streets. Council passed the vacating ordinance August 9th (Bill No. 54-2010). A follow-up ordinance, on December 27th, approved changes to the topography of South 10th Street, for the same project (Bill No. 107-2010).

the “Franklin Street Sidewalk Improvements” plan - §303.a.1 review

On August 24th, in an informal session, the Commission heard the presentation of Barry Isett & Associates, Inc. for a pilot downtown street-scaping proposal affiliated with the City’s “Downtown 2020” revitalization initiative.

**PUBLIC STRUCTURES** per Section 303.a.2

Nothing of the “public structure” category was presented to the Planning Commission during 2010.

**ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS & CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS** per Sections 303.a.3 and 609.c

[see: “Zoning Ordinance Amendments / Zoning Map Changes”, under the ZONING section, and “2010 Zoning Ordinance” under the OTHER BUSINESS section]

**Fiscal Years 2011-2015 Capital Improvement Program**

The draft capital improvements budget was not presented to, nor reviewed by the Planning Commission in 2010.

**PUBLIC WATER & SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE** per Section 303.a.4

No proposals fitting this category were reviewed by the Planning Commission in 2010.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**2010 Zoning Ordinance**

At its meetings January 26th, February 23rd, April 27th, May 25th, and then at a public hearing June 22nd, the Planning Commission reviewed and took the necessary procedural steps toward adopting a new zoning ordinance (see: resolutions ##2-, 15-, 25-, 30- and 34-2010), in accord with Sections 209.1.b.2 and 607.b of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. The new code, authored by Urban Research & Development Corporation, was ultimately adopted by City Council on July 26th (Bill No. 47-2010), approved by the Mayor on the 27th, and took legal effect ten days later on August 6th. It replaced an existing ordinance in effect since 2002. The Zoning Map was largely unaffected as a direct result of the effort, with the exception of several “institutional overlay” districts requested by the three City colleges, and also provided for the Reading Public Museum and Reading Hospital. The overlays were intended to simplify and accelerate development of the campus cores of those institutions. An amendment to the Ordinance was enacted February 14, 2011 (Bill No. 8-2011).

**Membership and Offices**

On December 13, 2010, City Council, based largely on the recommendation of the Planning Commission itself, and its staff, reduced the membership of the Commission from five to seven (Bill No. 103-2010). Vacancies and attendance had lately made for challenges in reaching the quorum necessary to convene meetings. The now *five* Commission seats are occupied. Brian Burket, the newest member, joined in-time for the Commission’s November 23rd meeting. The Commission demonstrates a combined experience in the fields of urban planning, architecture, historic preservation, construction, the arts, public education, and public administration. The current members and their terms are as follows:

- Ermete J. Raffaelli, Chairman – reappointed to the Commission, with a term ending April 1, 2012 (Council’s Resolution No. 100-2008)
- Brian Bingaman, Vice Chairman - appointed to the Commission January 26, 2009, with a term ending April 1, 2012 (Council’s Resolution No. 6-2009)
- Michael E. Lauter, Secretary - reappointed with a term formally expired April 1, 2009 (Council’s Resolution No. 113-2005)
- Wayne Jonas Bealer, Assistant Secretary – reappointed to the Commission December 13, 2010, with a term ending April 1, 2014 (Council’s Resolution No. 121-2010)

- Brian J. Burket, member - appointed to the Commission, with a term ending April 1, 2014 (Council's Resolution No. 108-2010)

Section 207 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code allows the Commission to elect its own officers. The Commission's by-laws state that such election shall be held annually, at the May meeting. On May 25th (resolution #31-2010), the Commission did so, filling the positions as noted.

### **Community Involvement**

Ermete Raffaelli serves as a member of the South Mountain YMCA Board of Directors. Mr. Raffaelli also serves as the President of the Reading Hose Company No. 1.

Michael Lauter serves as Executive Director of the Centre Park Historic District.

Wayne Jonas Bealer serves as the Planning Commission's representative on both the Blighted Property Review Committee and Vending Licensing Board, and is the Key Communicator for the Riverside Elementary School (Reading School District).

Brian Burket is a member of the Greater Reading Young Professionals Network (GRYP), serving on its Legislative Impact Committee

### **2010 PROJECTIONS**

Subdivision/Land Development Ordinance and Official Map, drafting, revising, preparing, amending and rewriting  
Having completed the Zoning Ordinance, attention in 2011 turns to the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance and an "official map", as provided for by Articles 5 and 4 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code respectively. These documents were also within the scope of the City's contract with Urban Research & Development Corporation, and are basically complete but for some last edits and inclusions of appendices.

#### Comprehensive Plan

Section 301.c of the Planning Code requires that municipal comprehensive plans be "reviewed at least every ten years". Last visited in 2000, that review is now due. While the policy aims of the existing document are generally still relevant, the existing Plan does target specific areas for redevelopment that since have been developed. At a minimum, the Plan should be proofread for these, and other goals either accomplished or made obsolete.

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Land development in 2010 continued to reflect the pace of a broader economic condition.

The City's entry into "Act 47" (a nickname for Pennsylvania's Municipalities Financial Recovery Act of 1987) in November 2009 had reverberations throughout 2010, as City government reassessed its priorities and "core services". How this ultimately affects local land-use planning remains to be seen.

The Planning Commission will continue to administer the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, and perform those zoning functions delegated it by law and/or ordinance. The Planning Commission and Planning Office each look forward to broader roles in the *master planning* of the City of Reading.

**City of Reading Planning Commission  
2010 Activity Summary**

<u>DATE</u>	<u>RES#</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>PLAN BOOK</u>
Jan. 26	n/a	2nd Street Learning Center (Opportunity House) - final subdivision/land development plan	tabled the final plan, 5-0	
Jan. 26	n/a	Oley Street Retail Center (Shuman Development Group) - sketch subdivision/land developme	heard the sketch presentation	
Jan. 26	n/a	Quaker Maid Parking and Trailer Storage - final subdivision/land development plan	tabled the final plan, 5-0	
Jan. 26	1-2010	\$513.a approval reaffirmation-South Campus Project (Alvernia University)	reaffirmed final plan approval, 4-1	2010003647
Jan. 26	2-2010	\$209.1.b.2 review-draft zoning ordinance by Urban Research & Development Corporation	scheduled public meetings, 5-0	
Jan. 26	3-2010	Russell Plywood New Warehouse - preliminary land development plan	denied the preliminary plan, 5-0	
Jan. 26	4-2010	recommendation for reuse-212 South 8th Street (blighted property)	recommended manufacturing-commercial reuse, 5-0	
Jan. 26	n/a	recommendation for reuse-157 North Front Street (blighted property)	withheld recommendation pending research	
Jan. 26	5-2010	recommendation for reuse-228 North 2nd Street (blighted property)	recommended residential reuse, 5-0	
Jan. 26	6-2010	recommendation for reuse-210 North Front Street (blighted property)	recommended residential reuse, 5-0	
Jan. 26	n/a	recommendation for reuse-153 Walnut Street (blighted property)	withheld recommendation pending research	
Jan. 26	n/a	\$603.c.2 conditional use review-1041 Penn Street (conversion)	withheld recommendation	
Jan. 26	7-2010	review the draft December 22, 2009 meeting minutes	approved the December 22nd minutes, 5-0	
Feb. 23	8-2010	\$508.3 agreement to extension-2nd Street Learning Center (Opportunity House) - final sub	agreed to review period extension, 4-0	
Feb. 23	9-2010	<b>Barley Square - final subdivision plan</b>	approved the subdivision plan, 4-0	<b>2010007159</b>
Feb. 23	10-2010	\$609.c review-petition to rezone 706R Lehigh Street, Residential 1 (R1) to Commercial High	recommended City Council's rejection, 4-0	
Feb. 23	11-2010	\$603.c.2 conditional use review-226 West Oley Street (conversion)	recommended City Council's denial, 4-0	
Feb. 23	12-2010	\$303.a.1 review-petition to vacate the 1000 block of Benner's Court	recommended City Council's approval, 4-0	
Feb. 23	13-2010	review the draft 2009 Planning Commission Annual Report	approved the 2009 Annual Report, 4-0	
Feb. 23	14-2010	review the draft January 26, 2010 meeting minutes	approved the January 26th minutes, 4-0	
Feb. 23	15-2010	\$209.1.b.2 review-draft zoning ordinance by Urban Research & Development Corporation	scheduled workshop meeting, 4-0	
Mar. 23	16-2010	<b>2nd Street Learning Center (Opportunity House) - final subdivision/land development pl</b>	approved the final plan, 4-0	<b>xxx page xxx</b>
Mar. 23	n/a	Oley Street Retail Center (Shuman Development Group) - final subdivision/land developmen	tabled the final plan, 4-0	
Mar. 23	17-2010	\$603.c.2 conditional use review-549 North 10th Street (conversion)	recommended City Council's approval, 4-0	
Mar. 23	18-2010	review the draft February 23, 2010 meeting minutes	approved the February 23rd minutes, 4-0	
Apr. 27	19-2010	<b>Oley Street Retail Center (Shuman Development Group) - final subdivision/land develop</b>	approved the final plan, 5-0	<b>2011004314</b>
Apr. 27	n/a	Barley Square - final land development plan	tabled the final plan, 5-0	
Apr. 27	n/a	R&D Building Addition (Sweet Street Desserts) - final land development plan	tabled the final plan, 5-0	
Apr. 27	20-2010	\$603.c.2 conditional use review-430 Elm Street (residential care facility)	recommended City Council's denial, 5-0	
Apr. 27	21-2010	\$603.c.2 conditional use review-315 North 6th Street (residential care facility)	recommended City Council's denial, 5-0	
Apr. 27	22-2010	\$603.c.2 conditional use review-335 North 11th Street (conversion)	recommended City Council's denial, 5-0	
Apr. 27	23-2010	appointing representation at the conditional use hearings	appointed representative, 5-0	
Apr. 27	24-2010	\$513.a approval reaffirmation-Lands of Munzer Yacoub	reaffirmed final plan approval, 5-0	xxx page xxx
Apr. 27	25-2010	\$209.1.b.2 review-draft zoning ordinance by Urban Research & Development Corporation	scheduled public meeting, 5-0	

**City of Reading Planning Commission  
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Apr. 27	26-2010	review the draft March 23, 2010 meeting minutes	approved the March 23rd minutes, 5-0
May 25	27-2010	<b>Barley Square - final land development plan</b>	approved the final plan, 6-0 <b>2011004227</b>
May 25	28-2010	<b>R&amp;D Building Addition (Sweet Street Desserts) - final land development plan</b>	approved the final plan, 6-0 <b>2010021912</b>
May 25	n/a	First Energy Stadium Renovation & Addition (Reading Phillies) - final land development plan	tabled the final plan, 6-0
May 25	29-2010	\$609.c review-petition to rezone 513-523 Crestmont and 512-524 Arlington Streets, R2 to	recommended City Council's adoption, 6-0
May 25	30-2010	\$209.1.b.2 review-draft zoning ordinance by Urban Research & Development Corporation	authorized submission for County Planning review, 6-0
May 25	31-2010	\$207 nominations-2010 Planning Commission office holders	elected the proposed slate, 6-0
May 25	32-2010	review the draft April 27, 2010 meeting minutes	approved the April 27th minutes, 6-0
Jun. 22	33-2010	<b>First Energy Stadium Renovation &amp; Addition (Reading Phillies) - final land development</b>	approved the final plan, 4-0 <b>xxx page xxx</b>
Jun. 22	n/a	Victor Emmanuel Parking & Banquet Hall Addition - final subdivision / land development plan	tabled the final plan, 3-0-1
Jun. 22	n/a	GoggleWorks Parking Lot - parking lot land development plan	tabled the final plan, 4-0
Jun. 22	34-2010	\$607.b hearing-the proposed zoning ordinance drafted by Urban Research & Development C	recommended draft ordinance to City Council, 4-0
Jun. 22	35-2010	review the draft May 25, 2010 meeting minutes	approved the May 25th minutes, 4-0
Jul. 27	n/a	Sylvania Homes II - Accessible Housing (Reading Housing Authority) - preliminary subdivisi	tabled the preliminary plan, 4-0
Jul. 27	n/a	Additions and Renovations: Amanda Stout Elementary School and Benners Court - preliminar	tabled the preliminary plan, 3-0-1
Jul. 27	n/a	First Energy Stadium Parking Lot - parking lot land development plan	tabled the parking plan, 4-0
Jul. 27	36-2010	\$609.c review-petition to rezone 513-523 Crestmont and 512-524 Arlington Streets, R2 to	recommended City Council's adoption, 4-0
Jul. 27	37-2010	\$603.c.2 conditional use review-501 South 19th Street (public utility)	recommended City Council's approval, 4-0
Jul. 27	38-2010	\$303.a.1 review-petition to vacate Benners Court and the 300 block of Maple Street	recommended City Council's approval, 3-0-1
Jul. 27	39-2010	review the draft June 22, 2010 meeting minutes	approved the June 22nd minutes, 4-0
Aug. 24	n/a	\$303.a.1 review-Franklin Street Sidewalk Improvements plan	heard presentation
Aug. 31	40-2010	\$508.3 agreement to extension-Victor Emmanuel Parking & Banquet Hall Addition - parcel at	agreed to review period extension, 3-0-1
Aug. 31	n/a	Sylvania Homes II - Accessible Housing (Reading Housing Authority) - preliminary subdivisi	tabled the preliminary plan, 4-0
Aug. 31	41-2010	<b>First Energy Stadium Parking Lot - parking lot land development plan</b>	approved the parking plan, 4-0 <b>xxx page xxx</b>
Aug. 31	42-2010	GoggleWorks Parking Lot - parking lot land development plan	denied the parking plan, 4-0
Aug. 31	43-2010	\$603.c.2 conditional use review-117 South 3rd Street (conversion)	recommended City Council's reconsideration, 4-0
Aug. 31	44-2010	review the draft July 27, 2010 meeting minutes	approved the July 27th minutes, 4-0
Oct. 26	45-2010	Acevedo Downing St. Subdivision - final subdivision plan	granted waiver and tabled, 5-0
Oct. 26	46-2010	<b>DoubleTree Hotel &amp; Garage Project - revision to record land development plan</b>	approved revision plan, 5-0 <b>2010048051</b>
Oct. 26	47-2010	Quaker Maid Parking and Trailer Storage - final subdivision and land development plan	granted waivers and tabled, 5-0
Oct. 26	48-2010	Additions and Renovations: Amanda Stout Elementary School and Benners Court - preliminar	approved preliminary plan, 5-0
Oct. 26	49-2010	<b>Play Lot at Grace and Pansy Streets - final land development plan</b>	approved final plan, 5-0 <b>2011001585</b>
Oct. 26	50-2010	<b>Victor Emmanuel Parking &amp; Banquet Hall Addition - final subdivision / land development</b>	approved final plan, 4-0-1 <b>xxx page xxx</b>
Oct. 26	51-2010	review the draft August 31, 2010 meeting minutes	approved the August 31st minutes, 5-0
Oct. 26	52-2010	settlement agreement-Big Spring, Inc. vs. City of Reading Planning Commission	approved amending the settlement agreement, 5-0
Nov. 23	53-2010	Lancaster Avenue Super Market - preliminary subdivision and land development plan	approved preliminary plan, 5-0

**City of Reading Planning Commission  
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Nov. 23	54-2010	review the draft October 26, 2010 meeting minutes	approved the October 26th minutes, 5-0
Dec. 28	55-2010	recommendation for reuse-217 North 2nd Street (blighted property)	recommended qualified R3 reuse, 4-0
Dec. 28	56-2010	recommendation for reuse-243 North 4th Street (blighted property)	recommended qualified R3 reuse, 4-0
Dec. 28	57-2010	recommendation for reuse-517 North 4th Street (blighted property)	recommended residential reuse, 4-0
Dec. 28	58-2010	recommendation for reuse-1237 Buttonwood Street (blighted property)	recommended qualified R3 reuse, 4-0
Dec. 28	59-2010	recommendation for reuse-161 Clymer Street (blighted property)	recommended residential use, 4-0
Dec. 28	60-2010	recommendation for reuse-146 Elm Street (blighted property)	recommended residential reuse, 3-0-1
Dec. 28	61-2010	recommendation for reuse-153 Elm Street (blighted property)	recommended residential reuse, 4-0
Dec. 28	62-2010	recommendation for reuse-305 Locust Street (blighted property)	recommended qualified R3 reuse, 4-0
Dec. 28	63-2010	§609.c review-"clarifications, corrections and additions" to the 2010 Zoning Ordinance	recommended City Council's adoption, 4-0
Dec. 28	64-2010	§603.c.2 conditional use review-245 South 4th Street (conversion)	recommended City Council's denial, 4-0
Dec. 28	65-2010	§603.c.2 conditional use review-1051 Chestnut Street (conversion)	recommended City Council's approval, 4-0
Dec. 28	66-2010	§603.c.2 conditional use review-143 South 12th Street (conversion)	recommended City Council's denial, 4-0
Dec. 28	67-2010	§603.c.2 conditional use review-1207 North 10th Street (conversion)	recommended City Council's approval, 4-0
Dec. 28	68-2010	§513.a approval reaffirmation-Oley Street Retail Center	reaffirmed final plan approval, 4-0
Dec. 28	69-2010	§508.3 agreement to extension-Acevedo Downing St. Subdivision	agreed to review period extension, 4-0

2011004314

n/a = no action, not applicable, or not assigned

xxx page xxx = recording required