

Reading Redevelopment Authority discusses potential client for Riverview Industrial Park

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By Valdis I. Lacis - Reading Eagle correspondent

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The Reading Redevelopment Authority board met in closed session Wednesday to consider several topics, including a potential client for its 50-acre Riverview Industrial Park at 600-700 Clinton St.

Executive Director Adam Mukerji said he could not give specific costs or other details, but noted that Paris Companies of DuBois, Clearfield County, is considering building a large commercial laundry services operation.

According to Mukerji, the company has signed a contract with Reading Hospital to do all of its hospital and health care linen services, but the contract also requires the nearly 100-year-old firm to build a laundry facility in Reading.

The Riverview Industrial Park near the Schuylkill Avenue Bridge is one of two sites being considered, he said. The other is the former Glidden Paint site off North Fifth Street.

The authority bought the Riverview property for \$1.56 million at sheriff sale in November 2013.

In other business, the board voted 3-0 to authorize temporary aerial and drainage easements at its three small parcels near Reading Area Community College to facilitate major reconstruction work on the Penn Street Bridge that is to start in mid-2016 and take two years.

Mukerji said the aerial easement will allow construction crews to use tall cranes and similar equipment to work on the deck and bridge underpinnings.

A different easement was granted to UGI for a right of way to run gas lines under the traffic island the authority owns on Buttonwood Street Bridge ramp south, just north of River Road.

The board then approved leasing a 10-space parking lot at Penn and Ninth streets to Dollar General for \$150 a month.

Chairman Chris Heinly said the formerly vacant lot used to have frequent problems with dumpster overflows and people dumping trash, but now Dollar General will clean and maintain the site.

The board informally discussed its need for two more people to join the authority's panel to bring its membership back to five.

Members James P. Radwanski and Daniel F. Luckey, along with administrator Dennis W. Witwer, noted that they are discussing the vacancies with potential candidates.

Mukerji added that the authority's contract with CBRE of Wayne, Delaware County, a global real estate services company the authority hired in July 2014, will end in three weeks, and the authority is considering other realty firms.

"The board appreciates the hard work of CBRE associate Paul S. Touhey and his firm," Mukerji said.