

DOYLESTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

**Regular Meeting
Tuesday, May 28, 2024 at 7 PM
Community Meeting Room, 425 Wells Road
Meeting Minutes**

The Doylestown Township Planning Commission Regular Meeting was held at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, May 28, 2024. Members of the Doylestown Township Planning Commission in attendance included Tom Kelso, Chairman; Judy Hendrixson, Vice Chairman; and member Michael Kracht, via Zoom. Others in attendance included Stephanie Mason, Township Manager; Judy Stern Goldstein, Gilmore & Associates; and Dan Wood, Board of Supervisors Liaison.

Not in attendance were members Jill Macauley and Robert Repko.

The meeting officially began at **7:10 pm**.

Mr. Kelso noted that members of the Planning Commission convened at 4 pm for site visits at 45 Sauerman Road and 280 N. Broad Street. The site visits were advertised prior to the meeting. It was an informative visit, and no action was taken.

Public/Commission Comments

None.

Review of Minutes

On a motion by Ms. Hendrixson, seconded by Mr. Kracht, the April 29, 2024 minutes were approved.

Presentation

N/A

Land Development

4 Buck Run Drive – Final/Minor Subdivision Plan – Lot Line Change

Presenting the proposed lot line change was attorney Christopher Fiore on behalf of the applicant Matthew Lafferty. The lot line change would involve the transfer of roughly .255 acres from 4 Buck Run Drive to 59 Steeplechase Drive. Review letters have been received and the applicant wishes to address those comments.

Ms. Goldstein noted a letter from Gilmore dated May 16, 2024 in which an updated impervious coverage calculation was requested. The applicant agreed to comply.

Thomas Phillips from 448 Cobblestone Way, which abuts the area, expressed concern over flooding in his backyard.

Mr. Fiore responded that there is no building or improvement anticipated on the property.

Gloria Phillips, also of 448 Cobblestone Way, asked what restrictions would be placed on the property.

Mr. Kelso explained that the building envelope and setback requirements would still apply as they do to any other property.

Mr. Fiore also clarified that there is no easement there, and no restrictive right of way. It is part of Mr. Lafferty's property which is private.

Ms. Phillips then asked if the grading of the property had been addressed on the plan.

Mr. Fiore explained that the grading and approvals are already in existence and that the property is in compliance. The applicant is only present for the lot line change, there are no other plans to construct anything on the property at this time.

Mr. Kelso made a motion for preliminary final approval contingent on the applicant addressing all of the concerns in the review letters. Ms. Hendrixson seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

33 Neill Drive – Sketch Plan – Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment

Presenting the sketch plan and proposed zoning amendment was Kevin Reilly, Vice President of County Builders, accompanied by Mike Meister, President. He provided a brief background of the purchase in 2016 and previous proposals for the property. Due to neighbor concerns, a 23-townhome community is now proposed with all access coming from Ferry Road. A text amendment for C4 zoning is proposed to allow for the development. The proposal was presented to the Township Board of Supervisors on April 2nd, and neighbors have been in support of the project as well.

There was a discussion of how the zoning amendment would impact other properties within the Township. There was concern over a potentially negative impact to other zoning districts.

Melissa Turner of Valley View Drive expressed appreciation for the developer speaking with the neighbors. They have had many reasons to oppose proposals in the past but believe this proposal is a good compromise with regard to traffic on their street and safety for the kids who play there. They wish to continue working together with the township and the developer.

Caroline, another neighbor of the property in question, expressed further support of the proposal.

Barb Sands of Tedwill Road stated that the issues are with traffic, specifically at the Route 313 traffic light, and with water. These issues need to be addressed.

Mr. Kelso explained that this is an early sketch plan, and that the applicant will come back with a more detailed plan to address those issues.

Mr. Kelso and Ms. Hendrixson raised concerns about setbacks proposed in the zoning text amendment. They're concerned for this property as well as others with similar zoning. He suggested the applicant revisit the setbacks.

Ms. Mason suggested tabling the text amendment and having a work session and further dialogue with the developer to address the concerns raised by the Planning Commission.

Mr. Kelso made a motion to table and carry on the discussion at the next meeting, adding that it be the first item on the agenda. Ms. Hendrixson seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Barn Plaza Redevelopment – Preliminary Land Development Plan

Presenting on behalf of the applicant were Attorney Gregg Adelman and engineer for the project, Brian Conlon. The proposal is for redevelopment of the current Applebee's building at the Barn Plaza. It would include an additional 2000 square feet of building space and increase the impervious coverage by roughly 940 square feet. The plan would also include patios for outdoor seating at the site, as well as the Honeygrow site that is currently operational. Mr. Conlon discussed the comments in review letters and the challenges the site presents due to its topography. He noted waiver requests.

Mr. Adelman noted the sidewalks and connectivity of the site as a deferral rather than a waiver request. These items will be addressed with the redevelopment of the Barn Cinema. The area in question is a more limited redevelopment area.

In summary, first, second and third waivers would be deferred, fourth would be a partial waiver, with one change to a turn radius on the plan and the last would be for limiting the area of land disturbance. In addition, a letter is needed from Bucks County Water & Sewer noting their permission for tree planting within their easement. All other comments are a will comply.

Janice Solkov, from the Greens of Doylestown, expressed concern over the traffic on Almshouse Road, particularly the backups at the light at 611. Traffic backs up from Easton Road down Almshouse to Eagle Lane. She asked what would be done to alleviate this problem, with now more traffic to the site likely.

Mr. Adelman replied that traffic numbers will be submitted to Penn DOT, and they will consider traffic signal timing, based on current traffic and what is projected. The applicant will do what Penn DOT tells them to do. He also noted that the focus on traffic will come during the redevelopment of the Barn Cinema.

Ms. Solkov urged the applicant and the Township to make Penn DOT aware of the people's concerns as much as possible.

Mr. Kelso added that the Township's traffic engineer will also review the application.

Ms. Mason noted that both Almshouse and 611 are state roadways.

Ms. Hendrixson made a motion to recommend preliminary/final approval, contingent on deferrals and waivers and compliance with comments in review letters. Mr. Kelso seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Other Business

1864 S. Easton Road – Change of Use in C1 Zoning

Ms. Mason noted that there is no proposed development associated with this, just a change in actual use. Under Section 175-125 in the Township Code, the purpose of the appearance before the Planning Commission is to avoid a full-blown land development plan for the applicant, however, it requires a presentation to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors in order to obtain a zoning permit.

Michael Beauchamp appeared via Zoom to explain the proposed use for e-commerce car sales. The location will be used predominantly for office space. They are a PA licensed dealership, but the cars are stored elsewhere.

There was a discussion of how this type of business should be classified and whether it meets the requirements for automobile sales. If it does not, then a Zoning Hearing Board application may be required. At a minimum, a zoning permit is required for the change of use.

It was requested that Mr. Beauchamp provide a site plan demonstrating the use of the space and compliance with the zoning requirements. He agreed.

Mr. Kelso made a motion that this does not move forward without submission of a sketch plan and written description of the use on the property. Ms. Hendrixson seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Adjournment

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 9 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kaitlyn Finley
Office Manager, Code Enforcement