

**DOYLESTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION**

**Regular Meeting**

**Monday, September 23, 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 Monday, September 23, 2024. Members of the Doylestown Township Planning Commission in attendance included Tom Kelso, Chairman; Judy Hendrixson, Vice Chairman; members Jill Macauley, Robert Repko and Michael Kracht. Others in attendance included Sinclair Salisbury, Code Official; Judy Stern Goldstein, Gilmore & Associates; and Dan Wood, Board of Supervisors Liaison.

Not present at the meeting was member Robert Repko.

The meeting officially began at **7:00 pm**.

**Public/Commission Comments**

None.

**Review of Minutes**

On a motion by Ms. Hendrixson, seconded by Mr. Kracht, the August 26, 2024 minutes were unanimously approved.

**Presentation**

**N/A**

**635 Main Street – Change in C1 Use from Mercantile to Service (Martial Arts Studio)**

Mr. Kelso opened the discussion regarding the change in use at 635 Main Street.

Mr. Salisbury explained the need for the discussion at Planning Commission which is based upon a change to the Township code for C1 and C3 districts. He introduced the applicant who was present to explain how they plan to use the property and whether it is suitable for the use. The property was last used as an antique store but has been vacant for several years.

Evan Chmielecki, owner of Fight for Tomorrow Martial Arts Academy was present, along with his realtor, Will Deschaine. He currently operates in Doylestown Borough and opened in February of 2022. He is looking for a larger interior space to accommodate growing volume of patrons. The academy offers full service martial arts, boxing, kickboxing and mixed martial arts. Classes are offered for ages 7 and up. The new space is 3100 square feet and is attached to Buckman's.

Mr. Deschaine explained that he had spoken to the owner of Buckman's, and that the martial arts academy could use their parking lot during the offseason, end of March through October, and after hours. There are 7 spaces currently available to the site.

Ms. Hendrixson asked about the timing of classes.

Mr. Chmielecki said that classes are primarily held in the evenings, Monday through Friday, with early morning classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The academy is closed on Sundays and operates until noon on Saturdays. He added that he will do whatever he can to make this space work and is open to any and all suggestions.

Ms. Goldstein explained that the Township needs to make sure that the zoning ordinance is met. The Township would need to see the parking calculation and the requirement for the use under which the academy falls.

There was a discussion about whether parking could be shared with the other businesses there or if letters from the property owners could help. Ms. Goldstein explained that the change in use requires him to meet the parking requirement. Parking for other businesses satisfies their requirement already.

Mr. Kelso noted that the options would be to come up with additional spaces or go to Zoning Hearing Board to request a variance.

Mr. Salisbury added that Ms. Mason, the Zoning Officer, would be able to better define the use classification, and suggested the applicant plan to meet with her.

Mr. Kracht expressed discomfort with the application of the ordinance and this issue coming before the Planning Commission. The PC does not have the ability to approve or deny the request.

Mr. Deschaine asked how street parking would play in.

Ms. Goldstein responded that the ordinance calls for off-street parking.

### **Land Development**

#### **Fir Line Properties Preliminary Land Development Plan**

Mr. Kelso explained that the applicant asked to be taken off of the agenda. They would like time to address review letters received and appear at a future meeting.

### **Fees in Lieu**

Although, not on the agenda Supervisor Nancy Santacecilia wished to discuss Fees in Lieu as part of SALDO. She discussed with Stephanie what triggers the use of those fees and how other Townships handle them. Ms. Mason had noted that the Fees in Lieu are triggered when the developer indicates not to make a public improvement. Ms. Santacecilia did not think the Township should incentivize developers not to do the improvements.

Mr. Kelso noted that this is primarily up to the Board of Supervisors and is pretty standard among local municipalities.

Ms. Goldstein added that fees can be adopted by the Board each year in their fee schedule, and it is not a planning commission item. Regarding the recreation fees, Park and Rec will typically decide whether they want land dedication or fees. She further noted that a study would be required to determine if the fees should be changed.

Ms. Macauley added that while it is not appropriate for every land development project, there is a need to incentivize developers to take care of park and rec.

Mr. Kelso added that the Planning Commission can make recommendations regarding waiver requests to the Board. And then the Township can negotiate fees in Lieu based on those requests.

**Other Business**

N/A

**Adjournment**

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 7:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kaitlyn Finley  
Office Manager, Code Enforcement