

DOYLESTOWN BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION
March 26, 2019
MEETING MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Doylestown Borough Planning Commission was held at 7:30 PM on March 26, 2019 in the Council Chambers at 57 West Court Street, Doylestown PA 18901. Members present were:

Chairman Gus Perea
Vice Chairman James Lannon
Lisa Farina
Heather Mahaley
Kim Jacobson
Karyn Hyland, Director of Building & Zoning
James Dougherty, Gilmore and Associates

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Mr. Perea, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance in honor of Martin Corr.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: On a motion from Ms. Farina, seconded by Ms. Jacobson, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the February 2019 minutes, as amended.

LAND DEVELOPMENT WAIVER: None.

SUBDIVISION and LAND DEVELOPMENT:

2018-05 - Preliminary and Final Review – Arcadia at Doylestown, 263 N. Main Street, TP #08-005-065, 08-005-066 & 08-005-067, Arcadia at Doylestown Holding LP, Property Owner

Kelly McGowan of Eastburn and Gray P.C. and Kristin Holmes of Holmes Cunningham Engineering appeared along with Jason Duckworth, president, Arcadia Land Company, eager to present to the commission for the first time, their plans for the Arcadia at Doylestown project. Mr. Duckworth provided some history of the property's use as a car dealership, among other things, and was converted to office space about ten years ago. He has been working on this project for two years, and was given Zoning Hearing Board approval 18 months ago and feels this neighborhood, given its mix of businesses and residential homes, while being within close walking distance to the center of town, is ideal for their plan of a new 46-unit residential building. The building will include a mix of one- and two-bedroom units with substantial amenities. The architectural approach will be in keeping with the community, while within the building, the interior is to be more design-forward. The entrance lobby will be decorated with a lounge space and the building also provides an exercise area. There will be a roof terrace and interior amenity space as well. Ms. Jacobson had questions regarding the terraces; Mr. Duckworth explained the roof terrace will be designated as level four, with a fifth level stepped back to be inconspicuous from outside the building.

Ms. McGowan noted the Zoning Hearing Board has granted significant zoning relief including a use variance to permit a multi-family high rise and another to permit 82.2% lot coverage. The current property includes an older commercial building in need of redevelopment which currently consumes 77% lot coverage. The proposed plan includes a four story building with underground parking, at approximately one space per bedroom. The floor size provided does not include parking space. Two access points to the property are required; there will be a driveway from Main Street as well as an entry on Lacey Avenue. Zoning relief was also granted for the building height, which is set to be 47.25 feet; the current maximum permissible height is 35 feet. Zoning relief was also granted to allow for plantings that will fit within the available space.

Ms. Holmes went over items to be reviewed from various consultants and letters in response have been submitted regarding each of the comments. Developer agreed that most issues raised in the professionals' letter are "will comply".

In response to questions from Ms. Jacobson regarding the rear elevation, Mr. Duckworth noted he will have the renderings corrected. Currently, the concern is that this is a difficult street to pull onto and improvements are needed. Mr. Perea feels that providing sight distances on the plan for review will help, which Ms. McGowan will provide in future plans. Ms. Holmes also noted the curb apron will be flared out to allow additional space. Ms. McGowan stated Arcadia and the Borough are working on an improvement plan to realign the streets and possibly add a Stop sign on North Street, prior to Lacey Avenue. There is also a plan to add street parking. Ms. Hyland acknowledged that improvements on North Street were included as a condition of the ZHB granting variances. Ms. Jacobson expressed concern regarding speeds of drivers exiting the parking garage, to which Mr. Duckworth advised there will be a gate or arm to exit the garage. The garage will be secured.

In response to Ms. Jacobson's questions regarding plans for additional lighting, Mr. Duckworth noted there are existing streetlights and they will work with the Borough on whatever lights are appropriate. There will be lamps on either side of the entrance to the building, as well as down-lighting and smaller lights along the front walls and small lights on the Lacey Avenue side of the building.

Regarding trash containers, Mr. Duckworth noted this will be contained inside the building in a designated enclosure and will be brought out for the hauler to service. Ms. Farina then inquired on plans for fencing and the perimeter of the building. Mr. Duckworth responded that while space is tight, there clearly needs to be layers of landscaping and fencing. The courtyard will include landscaping and fencing, along with an approximately three-foot retaining wall that tapers back to grade, on the Lacey Avenue side.

Several residents from the Belvedere neighborhood, which is located across Main Street from the proposed property, attended the meeting. Doug Zegel, one of the residents, spoke regarding his support of the plan. He noted many residents of the community are in favor of the project and are happy to see the plans. Katrina Hawkins, a resident of Lacey Avenue spoke as well, and is excited for this project but is concerned about traffic and safety at her driveway. Mr. Duckworth noted he will be working with neighbors and Ms. Hyland also stated there will be opportunities to work with the neighborhood residents to discuss road alignment concerns.

Construction will likely begin this summer, according to Mr. Duckworth. Ms. McGowan noted more information will be forthcoming at the next meeting.

2019-04 – Tentative Sketch Review – 353 E. State Street, TP #08-009-326 - Kari Williams Tyksinski, Property Owner

Kelly McGowan of Eastburn and Gray P.C. and Kristin Holmes of Holmes Cunningham Engineering presented a sketch plan for a subdivision concept, on behalf of the property owner. Currently, there is a single family home, which dates to 1849, with a detached garage and two driveways with one on East State Street and the other on Linden Avenue. The proposed subdivision would include two additional lots with lot one at approximately 13,500 square feet, lot two approximately 57,000 square feet and including the existing dwelling, and lot three at around 20,000 square feet. The plans are being presented as a sketch for the property owner to have an understanding of what the process would entail and what a potential subdivision would look like. Gilmore & Associates has reviewed the plan and issued a letter with their suggestions, as well as information detailing which trees would remain and which trees would need to be removed. Ms. Holmes noted each lot would have its own storm water area as required, as well as individual water service lines to Main Street. The current sewer line runs through lot one; this would be realigned into lot two and split off to the new dwellings. Ms. McGowan explained the driveway leading to Linden Avenue would be exclusive to the existing home, with the other two properties sharing the driveway to State Street.

This plan has been presented to the Commission asking for comments. No decisions are required at this time.

2019-05 – Preliminary Review – 93 & 95 Wood Street, TP #08-004-225 & 08-004-225-001 – Lisa Pavlow, Property Owner

Kelly McGowan of Eastburn and Gray P.C. and Kristin Holmes of Holmes Cunningham Engineering appeared on behalf of the applicant. The owner's primary residence is located at 93 Wood Street. Ms. Pavlow recently purchased 95 Wood Street, which includes the other half of 93 Wood's "twin" and is in poor condition. Ms. McGowan noted this proposal is being brought to the Commission while still in the feasibility process for discussion. The current proposal is to consolidate the lots and subdivide the property into three lots, including an expansion of Ms. Pavlow's existing home as a single-family detached dwelling, and the construction of two single-family semi-detached dwelling. The Zoning Hearing Board granted the necessary zoning relief.

There is an existing tree proposed to remain where the driveway is proposed. The property owner would like to save this tree and will work with an arborist and the Borough Shade Tree Commission in an attempt to save it.

Gilmore & Associates and CKS have reviewed the plans and identified several necessary infrastructure upgrades to accommodate the development. These include installation of a water main, replacement of existing storm sewer, and paving. The property owner is beginning to get cost estimates now and determining project feasibility. Ms. McGowan requested that itemized discussion of professionals' review letters be deferred until Ms. Pavlow decides how to proceed.

ORDINANCES and AMENDMENTS: None.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS: Ms. Jacobson reminded the Commission of the upcoming HARB Walking Tour. Properties to be included will be decided soon.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, on a motion from Ms. Jacobson, seconded by Mr. Lannon, the Commission adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Kramer
Meeting Minutes Secretary