

DOYLESTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

Monday, January 22, 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, January 22, 2024. Members of the Doylestown Township Planning Commission in attendance included Tom Kelso, Chairman; Judy Hendrixson, Vice Chairman; members Jill Macauley and Robert Repko. Others in attendance included Stephanie Mason, Township Manager; Judy Stern Goldstein, Gilmore & Associates and Dan Wood, Board of Supervisors Liaison.

Not in attendance was member Michael Kracht.

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

Reorganization

Ms. Hendrixson nominated Mr. Kelso as Chairman. Ms. Macauley seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Kelso nominated Ms. Hendrixson as Vice Chairman. Ms. Macauley seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

Review of Minutes

Mr. Kelso wished to add a key point regarding the LI district ordinance referencing the map provided by Mr. Ellinger (page 1, paragraph 2 under Old Business). Wording was provided for the note to be added. On a motion by Mr. Repko and seconded by Ms. Hendrixson the December 18, 2023 minutes were unanimously approved with the changes noted.

Public/Commission Comments / Presentations

N/A

Plans Scheduled for Discussion

Doylestown Veterinary Hospital & Holiday House (380 N. Shady Retreat Rd.) – Land Development Plan

Engineer Kristin Holmes, on behalf of the applicant, summarized the plan proposed for 380. N. Shady Retreat Road, which had previously been before the Planning Commission. Since then, the applicant has received relief and a special exception from the Zoning Hearing Board for the continued use on the property. The plan is for expansion of both the hospital and daycare to accommodate current operations. It includes a 4900 square foot attached addition to the hospital and a separate 8400 square foot building for the daycare, in addition to a reconfigured parking layout to allow for better circulation and safety. Stormwater management facilities are also proposed to accommodate the added impervious coverage.

Ms. Holmes noted that all comments in the staff review letters are will comply with the exception of three waiver requests.

Mr. Kelso asked about the conservation easement on the property and if the County was involved.

Ms. Mason said it only involves the Township, and that it has been part of the discussion. Staff feels that is has been covered.

Mr. Kelso asked how many employees work at the facilities.

Dr. Randy Weiss replied that Holiday House has approximately 75, with more than half of them being part time. The vet hospital has approximately 22 employees, three quarters of which are full time. He specified that the expansion is meant to accommodate current operations and provide more space for existing staff. In addition, widening of the driveway out to Shady Retreat Road will prevent a backup of cars on the road and better entry and exit.

Mr. Kelso asked about the bike path extension and work to be done at that intersection.

Ms. Holmes replied that widening of the private drive, a ridge already in place, and a three way stop at the intersection will slow people down and make it safer.

Mr. Kelso asked about the acceptability of the bridge structure for the fire department.

Ms. Holmes said that they would coordinate directly with the fire marshal on that. She noted that the bridge structure has been substantially reinforced.

Ms. Holmes presented three waiver requests including exemption from a detailed survey of features within 400 feet, providing a traffic study, and widening Shady Retreat Road along the property's frontage. Proposed plans will not only improve traffic but will alleviate concerns along the intersection.

Ms. Holmes concluded that they are asking for a preliminary final recommendation.

Mr. Repko made a motion to recommend preliminary final land development approval to the Board of Supervisors dependent on compliance with review letters and waiver requests. Ms. Hendrixson seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

In regard to the Planning Module, Ms. Holmes added that they filed a request for an exemption, and that the plan proposes connecting to public sewer.

Mr. Kelso made a motion to support the application to DEP. Mr. Repko seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

Doylestown Hospital Bucks County Crisis Center (595 West State St.) – Land Development Plan

Kellie McGowan, land use attorney for the applicant, summarized the project proposed by the County and Lenape Valley Foundation. The plan has previously been before the Planning Commission and includes a two-story building just under 24,000 square feet at Limekiln Road and Hospital Drive. She noted a change to the plan as a result of consultant reviews that flipped parking from one side of the access drive to the other. She added that they have three waiver requests, but all other items are will comply.

Ms. McGowan presented the waiver requests which included an exemption from a detailed plan showing features within 400 feet of the site, from providing a formal landscape conservation plan, and from providing a formal tree protection plan. They prefer to provide these calculations out in the field.

Ms. Goldstein responded that they would do a site visit prior to construction to work through the issues.

Mr. Kelso noted one area that could benefit from some additional planting from a conversation aspect is along Limekiln Road between the trail and tree line.

Ms. McGowan said they would work through these specifics in the site meeting.

Mr. Kelso asked about any changes to the bike and hike trail in this location.

Ms. McGowan said this has been taken to the Bike and Hike Committee, and that they are leaving the trail in the existing location but adding a grass strip where there used to be a shoulder. They are proposing to remove paving and add a strip that is about 5 feet to provide a buffer. There was a discussion of the safest type of buffer for the trail.

Ms. McGowan noted that they will be adding a new trail that will split off the existing trail and come through the site, connecting to the existing trail along Limekiln. They will also be adding a light in the new section of trail.

Ms. Goldstein noted choosing proper trees and placing them where roots would not disturb the path.

Ms. Hendrixson added that they are looking for variety and density.

Mr. Kelso asked how the plan effects impervious coverage at the site.

Ms. McGowan said that they have received approval for 68% from the Zoning Hearing Board. The plan will put them just under that, however they are working on reconciling existing calculations.

Ms. McGowan concluded that they are requesting preliminary final recommendation.

Mr. Repko made a motion to recommend preliminary final approval to the Board of Supervisors contingent upon waiver requests and will comply items in review letters. Ms. Macauley seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Kelso made a motion in support of requesting a waiver from the DEP for a planning module. Mr. Repko seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

Sketch Plans Scheduled for Discussion

N/A

Items Scheduled for Discussion

N/A

Ms. Mason noted that they should soon see plans for 1796 S. Easton, and possibly Brixmor later in the Spring.

Adjournment

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kaitlyn Finley
Office Manager, Code Enforcement