

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
ZONING WORKSHOP MEETING
August 2, 2018

The Board of Supervisors of Upper Merion Township met for a Zoning Workshop meeting on Thursday, August 2, 2018 in the Township Building. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m., followed by a pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Greg Philips, Bill Jenaway, Carole Kenney and Tina Garzillo. Also present were: Sally Slook, Acting Township Manager; Joe McGrory, Township Solicitor; Rob Loeper, Township Planner; Kyle Brown, Associate Planner. Supervisor Greg Waks was absent.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS:

Chairman Philips noted a continuation of an Executive Session was held after the last business meeting on July 19th to discuss litigation and personnel.

DISCUSSIONS:

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS

Kyle Brown, Associate Planner, discussed the changes that were suggested at the last zoning workshop.

Mr. Philips asked if the Commercial Industrial (CI) District includes all of GlaxoSmithKline (GSK). Mr. Brown responded the area below GSK is zoned residential. Mr. Philips asked if everything to the northeast of Jones Road has some residential component. Mr. Brown responded in the affirmative. Mr. Philips asked if the CI District should come all the way out to Jones Road. Mr. Loeper recalled there is a portion of the GSK property (200 or 300 foot buffer) that is deed restricted.

Mr. Brown stated it was suggested to allow more or less all of the retail trade in the CI District. He noted the ones that were added in this recent review would be required to be an accessory use taking up no more than 25%, but that could be changed as well.

Mr. McGrory asked for clarification if Mr. Brown was referring to retail as accessory. Mr. Brown responded he was referring to fine art gallery and sales, gift and novelty stores.

Mr. McGrory asked to what use they would be an accessory. Mr. Brown responded they would be like a primary office use with a specialty store on the first floor.

Mr. Loeper clarified all of these comments were received as part of the possible redevelopment of the GSK campus. He said the way the current ordinance reads it is basically all R&D and Office but they want to be able to provide some of these other types of amenities.

Mr. Philips questioned having an accessory use as opposed to a flat out use. Mr. Brown responded that change could be made.

Mr. Philips referred to mining and questioned having it as a permitted use in the CI District and recommended making that NP. Mr. Loeper noted mining is in the Industrial District.

Mr. Brown indicated a change was made adding colleges, universities and professional schools in the Industrial District. He noted hospitals were added as permitted in all business and industrial districts.

Mr. McGrory wanted to assure that hospital was clearly defined so it cannot be interpreted as drug and alcohol rehab. Mr. Brown responded hospital is defined. He said substance abuse treatment facility and methadone treatment facility are restricted as a conditional use in the industrial district with limits on parcel size.

Mr. McGrory asked about mental hospitals. Mr. Brown responded the suggestion is that mental hospital be added as a separate use and he would look into the definition of that use. Mr. McGrory commented it could be called many different things such as a sanitarium.

Mr. Loeper recalled the discussion he had with owners of a hotel on US 202 about a new concept for a micro hospital. Mr. McGrory indicated a definition for that use is needed.

The discussion returned to the subject of mental hospitals and where it should go. Mr. McGrory recommended limiting it to Heavy Industrial.

Mr. McGrory commented the other use that is emerging rather rapidly is Sober Living as a distinct use.

A discussion followed about this new concept and the process through which people are integrated back into a normal environment after drug or alcohol treatment.

Mr. Brown mentioned having a separate ordinance for Sober Living. Mr. Loeper suggested having these as conditional uses. Mr. McGrory said he would recommend having it as conditional use with some criteria limiting the size which he viewed as "key."

Mr. Brown asked what districts would be appropriate for this use. Mr. Philips suggested having it in a TOD since residents do not have cars and need transportation.

A discussion followed during which the implications of the Fair Housing Act for sober living were considered as well as the need for specific hotel language to achieve the desired result for this use.

Mr. Philips called attention to the new concept of high-end "doggie day care," that is a combination of kennel and grooming and said there is a need for a place in the township to allow that use.

A discussion followed during which the supervisors offered their comments as to how they view a kennel as opposed to doggie day care.

ADJOURNMENT:

Without further comment from the Board and public, the meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.


SALLY SLOOK
ACTING TOWNSHIP MANAGER

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Minutes Approved: 8-16-18
Minutes Entered:

