

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of December 17, 2024

The DRC meeting was held via Zoom

Members Present

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| ✓ Larry McEwen, Co-chair | ✓ Sam Filippi, Business Association |
| ✓ John Landis, Co-chair | ✓ Matt Rutt, Parking Foundation |
| ✓ Chris Linn, LUPZC | , Streetscape Committee |
| ✓ Steve Gendler, LUPZC | ✓ Matt Rutt, VP Physical |
| ✓ Patricia Cove, HDAC | Laura Lucas, President CHCA (ex-officio) |

Others Attending

Howard Nelson, owner Doggie Style stores
Eric Bodzin, attorney for Doggie Style Stores
Robert Elfant, Elfant Wissahickon Realty
Courtney O'Neill, CH BID
David Gest, CH Conservancy Executive Director
Anne McNiff, Executive Director CHCA
Celeste Hardester, Development Review Facilitator
Melissa Nash, recorder

The meeting was opened by John Landis, co-chair, at 7:02 pm. Intros were made and the process was briefly explained. This is the initial meeting for the Doggie Style Store.

Doggie Style, Germantown Avenue

•Presentation: The presentation was begun by attorney Eric Bodzin. The company currently has 12 locations in the area. Most are in Philadelphia with 2 in New Jersey and one in San Diego. Each store is different as they adapt to the neighborhoods. The Chestnut Hill store is planned for Germantown Avenue at Abington. The refusal is based on the use, which includes boarding of 2 dogs in the shop. The business services include pet adoption. Trash will be collected from the rear. Vans are used to transport supplies to the store and to take away recycling. The Germantown Avenue entrance is the main entrance. The side entrance is for grooming. The in-house kennels will be styled reflect the neighborhood. Howard Nelson, owner, continued the description. The stores sell food, treats, toys, baked goods and grooming. Poop bags are to be placed in the trash bay outside. The regular adoption program is unique. The dogs are pre-screened for compatibility. The dogs for the Chestnut Hill store will be furnished by ACCT. This store will have newly designed kennels to reflect the neighborhood. The front of the store will house the baked goods. There will also be pet clothing. Displays are on bone-shaped tables and there will be a treat bar. Large bags of food will be placed at the rear of the store. The dogs are housed overnight in the rear by the grooming area. The kennels are on wheels. Window treatments will be tasteful. There is no stacking of kennels. The sleeping kennels are smaller.

•Committee Comments/Questions: It was asked if all stores handle two dogs. That is the model. It was also asked if the neighbors have been notified. Larry McEwen asked about other dogs in the store. Customers also bring their dogs for shopping. A “yappy” hour may be held. One airline and running clubs volunteer to walk the store dogs. The hours are 9 am to 8 pm Monday through Saturday and 10-6

on Sunday. Patricia Cove asked how long a dog stays at the store. Dogs are moved after a few weeks if not adopted. It was asked if this variance was for this business only. The variance runs through this business/location only. This may be defined in the approval. This should be confirmed that the variance is for this business and this owner. Matt Rutt asked if the units above the store are rentals or condos. They are rentals. The owner supports the animal policies. The apartments are also allowed to have 2 dogs each. Provisions for trash and deliveries are available. There is a warehouse to supply the shops. Trash and recycling are picked up trash is along the back in closed containers. The business generates little trash. There is inside storage for waste, which is put out on the street on trash day. Provisions for parking were described. There is not a large amount of parking needed. Many customers walk. Customers make frequent small purchases. Patronizing the shop saves dogs.

- Presentation (continued): P Cove asked about signage and noted that there are signage guidelines. H Nelson stated that he had not seen the guidelines. He will provide signage at the next meeting. Bob Elfant stated that he and his wife have happily adopted a dog from Doggie Style.

- Committee Action: P Cove noted that HDAC does not need to see the proposal but is interested in it. LUPZC would like to review the project at the January meeting. J Landis asked that examples of the store kennels be shown. It was asked if they had puppies or grown dogs. It could be both. Dogs are shown on the website. Food and supplies for some small animals are also available. Celeste Hardester will send the signage guidelines.

Committee Business

- Minutes Approval: It was moved that the November minutes be approved. The motion was seconded. It was noted that water would be moved to Springfield or Valley Green rather than Willow Grove. With that change to minutes were approved.

- Germantown Avenue Overlay: This topic should be reviewed at the next meeting when Matt Rutt can attend. The Planning Commission did not approve the overlay and did not provide feedback. Cindy Bass expressed general approval for the overlay. The committee needs guidance for pursuing this topic. The committee needs to see the Planning Commission letter and should reach out to Ian Hegarty. S Gendler noted the Planning Commission has been changing and has little staff. Should this be an NCA or simply an overlay?

- Restaurant (corner of Willow Grove and Germantown Ave): L McEwen asked about the use variance noticed in the zoning notice in the window. CMX2.5 allows a restaurant as of right. The notice cites takeout in the description. This should be noted only for exclusive takeout.

- Signage Guideline: A brief discussion followed on how guide lines are brought to business owners' attention. C O'Neill noted that they do give out the guide lines and do check in with business owners. It was suggested that all business owners get the guidelines.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.