

CONSHOHOCKEN BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES/REPORT TO CONSHOHOCKEN BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEETING DATE: June 9, 2022

AGENDA ITEM #1 – CONDITIONAL USE APPLICATION

APPLICANT: Joseph Gallo
PROPERTY: 911 Fayette Street

COMMISSION ACTION: Recommendation for approval of conditional use application as presented.

MATERIALS REVIEWED: The Planning Commission reviewed the following materials:

1. conditional use application
2. 20 pictures of existing conditions
3. Agreement for the sale of commercial real estate between Jeff Gallo (buyer) and Lori Cerretti (seller)
4. zoning determination from Borough Zoning Officer, dated June 1, 2022

MEETING SUMMARY:

The property is located in the R-O Residential Office zoning district and is currently mixed-use. The ground floor of the existing structure was, until recently, occupied by a chiropractor's office. The second and third floor of the existing structure contains a residential apartment. The property does not have any off-street parking.

Prior to adoption of the Borough's current zoning ordinance, the property was given a zoning variance to permit the current use of the property, without off-street parking.

The first floor is vacant, and the applicant proposes to use the first floor for an insurance office. The residential apartment on the second and third floor would remain unchanged.

The following members of the Planning Commission were present: Elizabeth MacNeal, Chair, Daniel Swartley McArdle, Vice Chair, David Swedkowski, Dana MacNeal and and Judy Smith-Kressley. Also present for the Borough were Borough Solicitor, Michael Peters, Esquire, Borough Zoning Officer, Eric Johnson, P.E., and the Executive Assistant to the Borough Manager, Brittany Rogers.

Present for the applicant were Michael Yanoff, Esquire and Kendra Jennis, an employee with the insurance company that would occupy the property.

Mr. Yanoff explained the history of the property, and that his client is purchasing the property to move his insurance company to the existing building. The layout of the building will be essentially the same, with some internal renovation to create larger spaces on the first floor.

No changes are proposed with respect to the apartment space. There is one apartment on the second/third floors.

Mr. Johnson, the Borough's zoning officer, explained that the insurance office use is permitted by conditional use on the property, provided the criteria for a conditional use are met. Mr. Johnson explained the criteria to the Planning Commission, which include a focus on the exterior of the property, particularly on the Fayette Street side.

Mr. Johnson explained the history of the property with respect to zoning approvals, and stated that the proposed use and the conditional use application filed would actually serve to bring the property better into compliance from a zoning perspective.

Member Smith-Kressley asked whether there would be any exterior changes to the building/property, and Mr. Yanoff responded in the negative.

Member Swedkowski expressed his opinion that the proposed use would probably have less of a parking demand than the prior use. Ms. Jennis, an employee with the insurance company that would locate to the property, explained that the company rarely has customers on-site, and instead most work occurs over phone/e-mail.

Vice Chair Swartley McCardle asked whether the building would comply with ADA requirements, and Mr. Johnson explained that the applicant would need to proceed through the building permit process in terms of the renovations proposed.

Chair MacNeal asked whether the zoning ordinance or other Borough ordinance would restrict the number of employees that were permitted on the Property. Mr. Johnson explained that the zoning ordinance would not contain such a restriction.

Chair MacNeal asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

Vice Chair Swartley McCardle made a motion to recommend approval of the conditional use as presented. Member Smith Kressley seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously passed.