



GENA

Zoning Committee Meeting

August 14, 2014

Zoning Committee Members Present:

- John Longacre
- Toki Rehder
- Daniel Bartoli
- John Christinzio
- Maria Nevelson
- John Christinzio

Board Members Present:

- Gaetano Piccirilli

Applicants and Community Members:

- Charlie Ly (Applicant)
- Luen Vo (Applicant)
- Lou Pauzano
- Paula Terreri
- Peter Curran
- Michael Yanoff (attorney for 2514-18 24th Street)
- Mehmet Sonmez (Applicant)
- Andrew Margoles (attorney for 2514-18 24th Street)
- Mike Anderson
- Bill Carey (American Legion)
- Kenneth Young (attorney for 2136 West Passyunk)

Agenda:

(1) 2136 West Passyunk (Proposed Barber Shop)

- Currently zoned for doctor's office on first floor, residential on second
- Applicant would like to open a barber shop for kids and men on first floor
- The area in the back of the first floor will be for washing hair
- There will be no services for women (no nail or hair colorings services)
- No construction has occurred inside except painting, no other construction will be required
- Proposed hours of operation – Monday to Saturday 10-6, Sunday 10-4
- Property is the second to the last on the block, immediate neighbors did not attend meeting
- Business will be operated by Mr. Vo and his wife



- Mr. Vo will live on the second floor of the property with his wife and daughter
- The entrance to second floor is through driveway in the back
- The entrance to the barber shop will be through the front facing Passyunk Avenue
- The basement will be used for storage
- Currently, there is 1 bedroom and 1 bathroom upstairs. There are tenants in the building now, but they will be moving out soon
- Questions from the zoning committee:
 - Will family of three be living in 1BR, 1BA unit?
 - Applicant will present second floor plans at September Zoning Committee Meeting
 - Applicant would agree to proviso that use is approved so long as he and family live upstairs
 - Is the plan for illuminated or non-illuminated signage?
 - Applicant would agree to non-illuminated signage
 - “Haircut Open” sign in window?
 - Applicant would agree to non-illuminated removable sign
 - 3 year revisit of application
 - Application would agree a temporary approval to be revisited in three years
 - Lighting after business hours
 - There are lighting sconces on the front of the building
- Community concerns:
 - Illegal parking in shared driveway
 - Increase in traffic, parking problem
 - Change in character of residential neighborhood
- Next steps
 - Applicant will appear again at September 10th Zoning Committee Meeting with plans for second floor and more detailed renderings of proposed signage.

2514-18 24th Street (Proposed Pawn Shop)

- Description of business: will provide customers with help selling their items on ebay, will also operate as personal credit establishment
- Applicant has signed a lease on the first floor of the property contingent on the zoning
- Current zoning: industrial
- Next to PECO substation
- Application is for a special exception or use variance, not a zoning variance
 - Personal credit establishments not permitted in this zoning district
 - Within 1000 feet of regulated use – applicant asserts this does not apply because Western Union Check Cashing business on Passyunk has been closed for more than a year
 - Within 500 feet of residence
- Building is owned by Ambo Inc., which is owned by Scott Ingerman. He used to run the bingo hall and currently lives in Texas and operates a bingo hall in San Antonio.



- Owner leases the second floor of the building to the American Legion.
- First floor currently leased to nonprofit organization from Germantown at less than market rent
- Argument in favor of pawn shop business:
 - Alternative industrial uses, which property's current zoning would allow, would be worse
 - This business would be a low impact service use
 - Potential provisos – limit special exception to this tenant, would not transfer upon sale of property. Can also put provision in lease for termination if conditions not met.
 - Personal credit establishment use is required for special exception, can't rent to a retailer unless zoning variance is granted to change from industrial to commercial. There is a higher standard for zoning variance requests.
- Mehmet Sonmez (Lessee/Operator)
 - Owned pawn shop before in Rochester, New York
 - Goal is high class pawn shop with antiques, sports memorabilia
 - 5-7 years of experience in pawn shop
 - No weapons would be sold pawnshop with the exception of perhaps WWII memorabilia, but this would be rare
 - Has no ties to Girard Estates but plans to move his family from Rochester NY to Philadelphia
 - Plans to hire Philadelphia workers
 - Will keep clean, will be a "family owned business"
 - Hours – whatever committee decides
 - Proposed Signage - LED
 - "Go Rapid Pawn" is name of business, but he would be willing to change the name to avoid using "pawn" in name
 - Diamond placard in window will indicate it is a pawn shop
 - Intends to invest \$100,000 in building including heating system
 - Business would be staffed by himself, wife, and 16 year old daughter
 - Business would include cell phones, both prepaid and contract
 - Pawn shop business would only be 10% of revenue
- Zoning Committee concerns:
 - How will applicant prevent the pawning of stolen goods?
 - He will have 64 cameras on and in the building
 - Items have to have serial numbers, these numbers are reported to police
 - He will hold merchandise for 14 days before can be sold – 7 day hold required under law
 - No one under 18 will be permitted in the store
 - GENA opposed a pawn shop application two years ago, how is this shop different?
 - Different ownership – should judge each application on its own merits
 - If pawn shop is only 10% of business, would he be willing to forego and focus on cell phone/ebay businesses?



- Yes, but then would need a zoning variance rather than special exception
- Community input:
 - American Legion upstairs tenant supports application because:
 - Pawn shops are heavily regulated by police
 - The first floor of the building is underutilized
 - Can actually help police catch criminals who attempt to sell stolen goods
 - Will bring some jobs to the area
 - Money making business will increase value of property and would subsidize the American Legion use upstairs
 - Opposition was voiced regarding potential sale of stolen goods
- Next Steps: Zoning Committee would like to know proposed business name (without “pawn”) and requested more detailed renderings showing signage and lighting. Zoning Committee will take application under advisement in a separate meeting.