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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 7, 2024

Mr. Paul Purtell, Director, Planning, Zoning & Inspections
Upper Moreland Township
117 Park Avenue
Willow Grove, Pennsylvania 19090-3215

Re: MCPC # 24-0098-001
Plan Name: Starbucks
(0.32-acre pad site on 1 lot comprising approximately 8.45 acres)
Situate: 1130 Easton Road (cross streets: Wyandotte Road (w), Andrea Drive (e))
Upper Moreland Township

Dear Mr. Purtell:

We have reviewed the above-referenced subdivision and land development in accordance with Section 502 of Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code," as you requested on April 25, 2024. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Treeco Willow Grove, LP, is proposing to develop a 1,684-square foot Starbucks Café on a pad site within an existing commercial development. The property is currently fully developed and contains an existing building with two commercial retail businesses and a surface parking behind the buildings as well as the entire front portion of the property. The proposed Starbucks Café would be constructed on a portion of the existing parking lot in the northwest corner of the property with frontage along Easton Road.

The proposed café would include drive-through facilities and would be accessed by an existing driveway from Easton Road. The drive-through lane would provide stacking for 16 cars, surrounding the parking lot and one-way vehicular circulation lane through the site. The proposed development would provide 14 parking spaces and would result in a decrease in the overall amount of parking on the property. The applicant was granted Special Exception to permit the café with a drive-thru on the property (§ 350-75.C(1)), and to permit 355 rather than 404 parking spaces (§ 350-178.E)). A pedestrian accessway would be provided between the building entrance and outdoor seating area and the sidewalk along Easton Road.

The proposal includes a rain garden that would connect to the existing onsite stormwater conveyance system that drains into the Fitzwatertown Creek, which runs along the northwest property line. The property is located in the C-2 Commercial Zoning District and is served by public water and sewer.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

A. *Montco 2040*. The proposal is generally consistent with *MONTCO 2040: A Shared Vision*, which designates the area as a "Community Mixed Use and Services" future land use category. Community Mixed Use and Service areas are local community focal points that typically have a significant retail element with surrounding residential uses. These centers are located on major roads and usually have a suburban character. Developments should share driveways, have interconnected parking lots, be designed for walking, and have extensive buffering next to residential areas.

B. *Upper Moreland 2040*. The proposal is also generally consistent with Upper Moreland's comprehensive plan, which categorizes the site as the Commercial-Mixed Use Corridor future land use, which includes suburban style commercial development primarily consisting of retail, service, and professional office uses. New development should recognize the suburban character while also improving the appearance and walkability of the corridor.

RECOMMENDATION

The Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) generally supports the applicant's proposal, however, in the course of our review we have identified the following issue that the applicant and township may wish to consider prior to final plan approval. Our comments are as follows:

REVIEW COMMENTS

LANDSCAPING

A. Shade Trees. The applicant is proposing to plant nine trees along the property line and one tree along the Easton Road property frontage. It appears that the proposed shade trees are located primarily along the northwest property line abutting the Fitzwatertown Creek. We recommend that more shade trees be integrated into the site design, including in front of the building, in the parking lot islands, and around the outdoor patio seating area.

   1. *Parking Lot Landscaping*. The applicant is requesting a waiver from the subdivision and land development ordinance §300-43.D(1)(d) to not plant trees in the parking islands, due to the existing utilities. We strongly recommend that the applicant consider planting additional trees to mitigate the heat island effect. Provided the correct species is selected, a tree could be planted in the proposed rain garden. We suggest referencing the MCPC Sustainable Green Parking Lots guidebook for guidance on rain garden design and tree species selection.

   2. *Outdoor Patio*. We recommend planting shade trees around the proposed outdoor patio to provide shade for people who sit outside.

B. Preservation of Existing Trees. Based on the landscape plans provided, it appears that existing street trees along Easton Road would be preserved and protected during construction with a fence. The applicant should ensure that no construction machinery or debris is placed within the fenced area in order to protect the root

system. We recommend that the township determine if the existing trees are healthy or if they need to be replaced post-construction.

TRANSPORTATION

A. Bus Stop. There is currently a SEPTA Route 55 Bus Stop in front of the property at 1300 Easton Road that services Doylestown to the Olney Transit Center in Philadelphia. Based on aerial imagery, the bus stop does not appear to have a shelter or seating, and the grass in the verge appears to be worn away from people standing around the bus stop sign. We encourage the applicant to provide an improved bus stop that better accommodates people who ride the bus to work or access services in the area. A shelter with seating provides a more comfortable transit experience for people waiting for the bus, and a clear pedestrian path and loading pad improve accessibility. We recommend the applicant reference the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commissions' (DVRPC) SEPTA Bus Stop Design Guidelines for curbside facility design.

1. *Bus Revolution.* SEPTA is in the process of redesigning the entire bus network through the Bus Revolution project. We recommend coordinating with Dan Nemiroff, the project manager at SEPTA for Bus Revolution, for more information about Bus Revolution and the potential impact to this bus stop.

CONCLUSION

We wish to reiterate that MCPC generally supports the applicant's proposal but we believe that our suggested revisions will better achieve Upper Moreland's planning objectives for commercial development on Easton Road.

Please note that the review comments and recommendations contained in this report are advisory to the municipality and final disposition for the approval of any proposal will be made by the municipality.

Should the governing body approve a final plat of this proposal, the applicant must present the plan to our office for seal and signature prior to recording with the Recorder of Deeds office. A paper copy bearing the municipal seal and signature of approval must be supplied for our files. Please print the assigned MCPC number (24-0098-001) on any plans submitted for final recording.

Sincerely,

Claire Warner, Senior Community Planner
Claire.Warner@montgomerycountypa.gov – 610-278-3755

c: TREECO Willow Grove, LP, Applicant
Gregg I. Adelman, Applicant's Representative
CJ BOCK, PE, Applicant's Engineer
Patrick Stasio, Interim Township Manager, Upper Moreland Township

Jennifer Mullen, APA Vice Chair, Upper Moreland Township
Dan Nemiroff, SEPTA

Attachment A: Aerial Image of Site
Attachment B: Reduced Copy of Applicant's Proposed Site Plan

ATTACHMENTS A & B

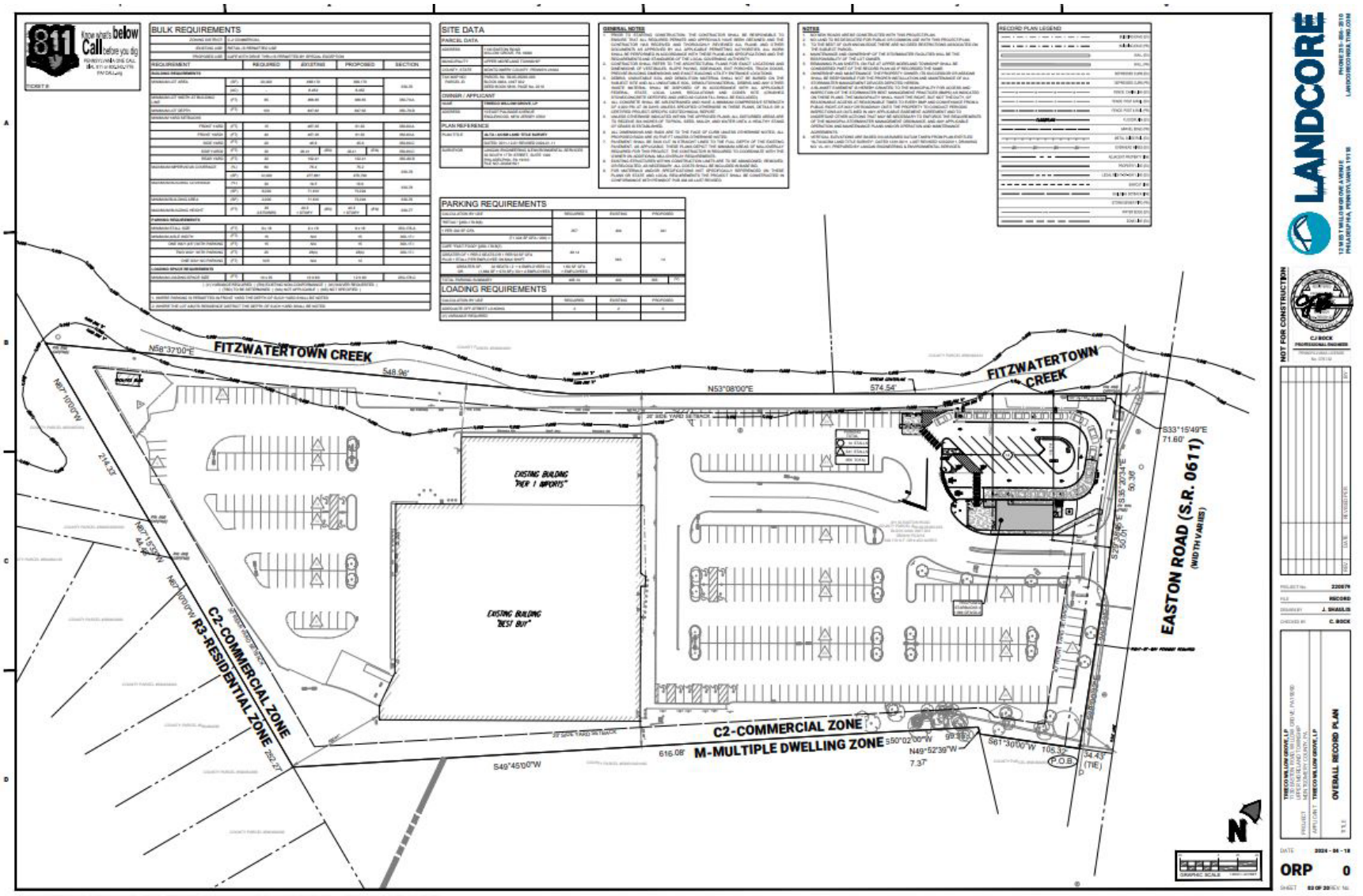


Starbucks
MCPC#240098001

Montgomery County Planning Commission

0 100 200 400 Feet

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811 Know what's below Call before you dig
BULK REQUIREMENTS
SITE DATA
PARKING REQUIREMENTS
LOADING REQUIREMENTS
GENERAL NOTES
NOTES
RECORD PLAN LEGEND
FITZWATERTOWN CREEK
N58°37'00"E
548.96'
N53°08'00"E
574.54'
FITZWATERTOWN CREEK
S33°15'49"E
71.60'
EASTON ROAD (S.R. 0611)
(WIDTH VARIES)
EXISTING BUILDING "REP. 1 IMPORTS"
EXISTING BUILDING "BEST BUY"
C2-COMMERCIAL ZONE
R3-RESIDENTIAL ZONE
C2-COMMERCIAL ZONE
M-MULTIPLE DWELLING ZONE
N49°10'00"W
214.33'
N49°15'00"W
44.50'
N49°10'00"W
252.27'
S49°45'00"W
616.08'
S50°02'00"W
99.38'
N49°52'39"W
7.37'
S61°30'00"W
105.32'
P.O.B.
34.43'
(TIE)
20' SIDE YARD SETBACK
LANDCORE
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION
OVERALL RECORD PLAN
ORP
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