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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June 14, 2024

Ms. Lisa M. Hiltz, Administrator
Borough of Pennsburg
76 West 6th Street
Pennsburg, Pennsylvania 18073

Re: MCPC #24-0129-001
Plan Name: Pennsburg Oral Surgery
(3 lots/5,540 sf comprising 0.469 acres)
Situate: 4th Street/ Main Street
Borough of Pennsburg

Dear Ms. Hiltz:

We have reviewed the application for the above-referenced subdivision and land development in accordance with Section 502 of Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code," as you requested on May 28, 2024 in an electronic submission to this office. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Christopher DeLuca, has submitted a plan proposing the construction of a 5,540 sq. ft. oral surgery office at the corner of 4th Street and Main Street in Pennsburg. The application includes the consolidation of 3 existing lots and tax parcels into one consolidated lot with a net lot area of 20,342 sq.ft. or 0.469 acres. The lots are situated in the borough's R-C Residential-Commercial District with a maximum impervious coverage of 75% and building coverage maximum of 30%.

The corner lot is a prominent location in the borough and is opposite a 'Welcome to Pennsburg' gateway brick decorative wall that was completed when the former Rite-Aid drugstore was developed. A large area of the applicant's development tract has served as a quasi-public area on a private lot for many years. A winding sidewalk enters from Main Street and connects to a circular area with a flag pole, and nearby is a 30+ tall Colorado blue spruce. Several of the borough's period Victorian lampposts are along this walkway. A major portion of the applicant's development tract has been vacant for many years.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

Consistency with *Montco 2040*- A Shared Vision
The plans for the redevelopment of this site as a commercial and medical use is consistent with the future land use vision and stated goals of *Montco 2040: A Shared Vison*, the comprehensive plan and future land use vision for the county. The Future Land Use Map of the plan designates the land use vision for the site as a Village-Commercial (VC) area set within developed communities.

"https://www.montcopa.org/1579/Montco-2040-Comprehensive-Plan).

RECOMMENDATION

The Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) generally supports the applicant's proposal for the redevelopment of a prominent corner in the borough's commercial core which has been vacant and underutilized for many years. However, in the course of our review we have identified an opportunity for the applicant to preserve the large evergreen spruce tree and incorporate it into a more contextual-sensitive treatment along the Main Street frontage. This area is situated at a significant cross-roads; therefore we believe it's a valuable opportunity to make a highly visible area compatible within its gateway position. An explanation and our other comments follow:

Our comments are as follows:

COMMENTS

1. **Main Street Frontage- Site Improvements**

   The site development frontage along Main Street is a key location within the borough, and we believe it provides an important opportunity to create an area with a public presence that would preserve some community space elements that currently exist. The proposed plan would remove an existing, small, yet important green, public space with a flag-pole and a very tall Colorado blue-spruce tree. An evergreen tree of this size and stature in a paved environment is a real community asset and an attempt should be made to preserve the tree in this redevelopment. We believe that with some adjustments in the arrangement of water utilities and minor grading changes this tree could be incorporated into the applicant's site development in a positive manner. We are attaching a sketch plan that shows the preservation of the blue spruce and how the flagpole and a seat-wall area could be included within the site's redevelopment. We recommend the applicant consider incorporating this

seat-wall as illustrated in Attachment-A or similar type of amenity in lieu of the 2- 7 ft. benches that are in the proposed plan. We suggest that the materials and the design could complement the “Welcome to Pennsburg” brick-wall at the former drugstore site.



View of Community Space - Large Spruce Tree/Flagpole/Period Lamps

2. Architecture of the Oral Surgery Building

The borough should ensure the building’s architecture and facades are an appropriate fit with the Main Street commercial district buildings being sensitive to the style and materials of representative buildings. We recommend the applicant provide elevations of the proposed building for the borough’s assessment if they have not already done so.

3. Landscape Plan- Proposed Street Trees

The proposed addition of street trees by the applicant is an effective arrangement and can assist in creating a more pedestrian-friendly environment for residents. We recommend a change in the 2- Red oak tree species proposed. This species is very susceptible to various leaf foliar disease and may not thrive as well as some other tree species. We recommend that the plan include a Willow oak (*Quercus phellos*) or the Swamp white oak (*Quercus bicolor*) instead. These are proven street trees and should be more effective.

CONCLUSION

We wish to reiterate that MCPC generally supports the applicant's proposal but we believe that our suggested recommendation for the site development's Main Street frontage will better achieve the borough's vision for redevelopment of the site. We recommend the township address these comments to your satisfaction.

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 # 24-0129-001.

Sincerely,

Barry W. Jeffries

Barry W. Jeffries, ASLA, Senior Design Planner

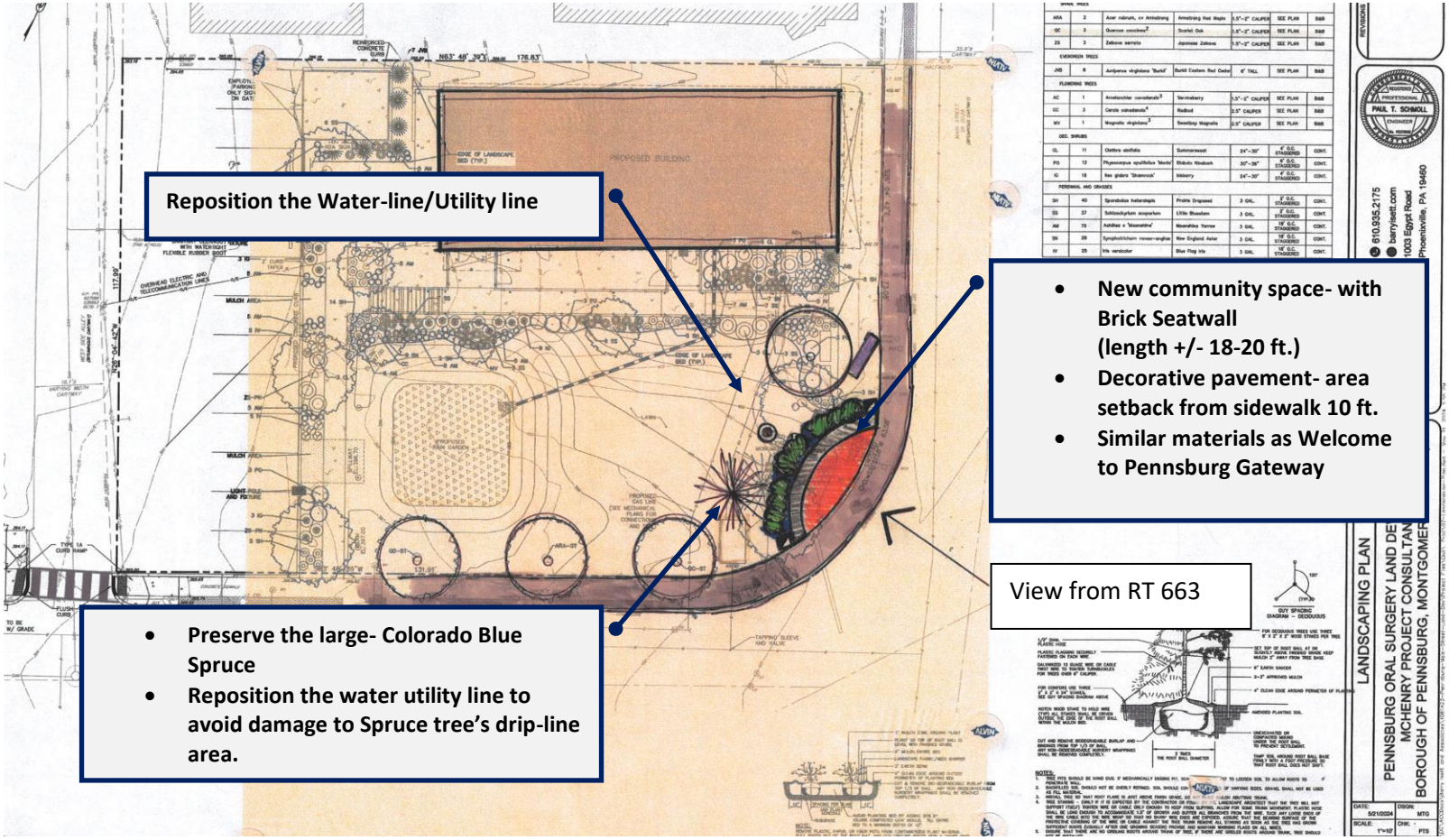
Barry.Jeffries@montgomerycountypa.gov , 610.278.3444

c: Christopher DeLuca, Applicant
Barry Isett & Associates, Inc., Applicant's Representative
Chair, Pennsburg Municipal Planning Commission

Attachment A: Sketch for Main Street frontage.
Attachment B Aerial Image of Site
Attachment C: Reduced Copy of Applicant's Proposed Site Plan

ATTACHMENTS A, B, C

Attachment- A



Attachment B:



Pennsburg Oral Surgery
MCPC#240129001

Montgomery County Planning Commission

0 50 100 200 Feet

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ATTACHMENT C

