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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

October 17, 2024

Sara Jarrett-Eaton, Manager
Souderton Borough
31 West Summit Street
Souderton, PA 18964-1693

Re: MCPC #24-0204-001
Plan Name: 575 East Broad Street
1 lot comprising 0.59 acres
Situate: East Broad Street and School Lane
Souderton Borough

Dear Ms. Jarrett-Eaton:

We have reviewed the above-referenced land development in accordance with Section 502 of Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code," as you requested on September 20, 2024. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Kyle Hoff, proposes a commercial development on a vacant 0.59 acre parcel in the MUR Mixed Use Redevelopment zoning district. One two-story building is proposed that will be 31 feet in height. The building is proposed to be divided into four commercial spaces of approximately 2,275 square feet each. The site is also proposed to have a 29-space parking lot, a 900 square foot outdoor patio, street trees, a rain garden, and an underground stormwater retention basin. Some existing parking for the adjacent stacked townhomes is also shared with this site.

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 issues that the applicant and Souderton Borough may wish to consider prior to final plan approval. Our comments are as follows:

REVIEW COMMENTS

PATIO

A. Size and Design. The applicant has included a patio at the corner of East Broad Street and North School Lane. The plan set is unclear on some details regarding the design of the patio and the adjacent space. (See zoning §2004.B.3. and Subdivision and Land Development (SALDO) §420.1.A.)

   1) Patio Size. The zoning for the MUR Mixed Use Redevelopment district requires that at least 5% of a site be devoted to "public open space amenities" such as trails, plazas, outdoor dining, lawns, playgrounds, or other active recreation areas. As the site is approximately 25,700 square feet, a total of 1,285 square feet of open space amenities would be required. As the patio is indicated at 900 square feet, we recommend the applicant indicate on the plan set how this requirement is being met.
   2) Patio Design. Landscaping, street furniture, and other amenities are not shown on the plan set for the patio. We recommend the applicant indicate what is proposed for this space, as it would be helpful to understand how this proposed patio will function as a public open space amenity.
   3) Space between Patio and Sidewalk. There is an area between the patio and the sidewalk that is 9 feet wide and approximately 60 feet long and contains one street tree. We recommend the applicant clarify how this area will be utilized.

B. Access. It is unclear how people will get from the patio to the sidewalk and vice versa. The plan set seems to indicate fencing around much of the patio, so it would be helpful to clarify where the access points are located.
C. Signage. The applicant proposes a signage wall at the corner of the patio. This is likely a positive amenity for the site, but it will require design approval per the SALDO §420.5.

TRANSPORTATION, CIRCULATION, AND PARKING

A. Sidewalk Separation from Broad Street. The SALDO requires a four-foot wide landscaped separation of the sidewalk from Broad Street, per §420.1.E.6. We recommend the plans be updated to include this.
B. Transit Stop. The applicant has included transit stop amenities as required by $420.1.D and as requested by SEPTA. The bench and ADA loading pad are shown on the plans. However, the SALDO requires a shelter in addition to what is proposed. The applicant has coordinated with SEPTA, and SEPTA has said they are satisfied with the bench and ADA loading pad. We feel that this is adequate given the collaboration with SEPTA. However, the applicant likely needs to request a waiver from part of this section, §420.1.D.2.
C. Vehicle Circulation. We commend the applicant for proposing to close the driveway access from Broad Street. We believe this will increase safety for both vehicles and pedestrians. We suggest the applicant consider painting a crosswalk across the driveway opening from School Lane.
D. Bicycle Parking. We suggest the applicant consider including two bicycle parking spaces on the site.

ARCHITECTURAL REQUIREMENTS

A. Horizontal Articulation. The building has required design elements such as awnings, porches, canopies, towers, balconies gables, changes in materials, etc. (§420.4.A.1.b.) The applicant should indicate how they intend to comply with this requirement.
B. Building Entrance. The building entrance is required to have an accentuated primary entrance. (See §420.4.B.1. and §420.4.B.6.) In addition, the applicant may need a waiver from the requirement for corner buildings to either locate the entrance at the corner or to have an entrance on each of the corner facades. (§420.4.B.2.
C. Façade design. The applicant should indicate how they are complying with the requirements for façade design and window area. See §420.4.B.5 and §420.4.E.
D. Roof. The applicant should indicate how they are complying with the roof design and HVAC screening requirements of §420.4.G and H.
E. Materials. The applicant should indicate how they are complying with the requirements for building materials in §420.4.J.

LANDSCAPING

A. Street Trees. It is not clear whether the applicant has met the requirement to average one street tree for every 30 linear feet of roadway. We believe the applicant may need two or three more street trees. We recommend the applicant include a landscaping table indicating how the requirements are being met. The applicant should also demonstrate how they intend to satisfy the requirement for tree pits or planting strips and minimum soil volume for street trees. See §420.3.C.8.
B. Parking Lot Landscaping. A planting island is required for every twelve parking spaces per §420.3.G.1. Thus at least two such planting islands should be provided. In addition, a minimum of 5% of the interior area of each parking lot shall be landscaped. The applicant should indicate how they plan to comply with these requirements.

OTHER SITE ELEMENTS

A. Street Furniture. The applicant is required to include planters and a pair of trash and recycling receptacles and to submit a list of proposed street furniture with the plan set. See §420.2.A.
B. Lighting. The applicant does not appear to have submitted a lighting plan. We defer to the borough engineer for compliance on lighting, but remind the applicant that proposed lighting fixtures need to be approved by Borough Council per §420.2.B.5.We also note that there are lighting standards in §420.6 (SALDO) and §2008 (zoning) to be upheld as well.
C. Waste Disposal Screening. The applicant indicates a dumpster enclosure on the plan. We note, for the applicant's reference, that the SALDO requires opaque walls at least 6 feet in height around the dumpster area with a self-closing fence or gate. See §420.1.G.3.

CONCLUSION

We wish to reiterate that MCPC generally supports the applicant's proposal but we believe that our suggested revisions will better achieve Souderton Borough's planning objectives for high quality commercial development. 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. Please print the assigned MCPC number (#24-0204-001) on any plans submitted for final recording.

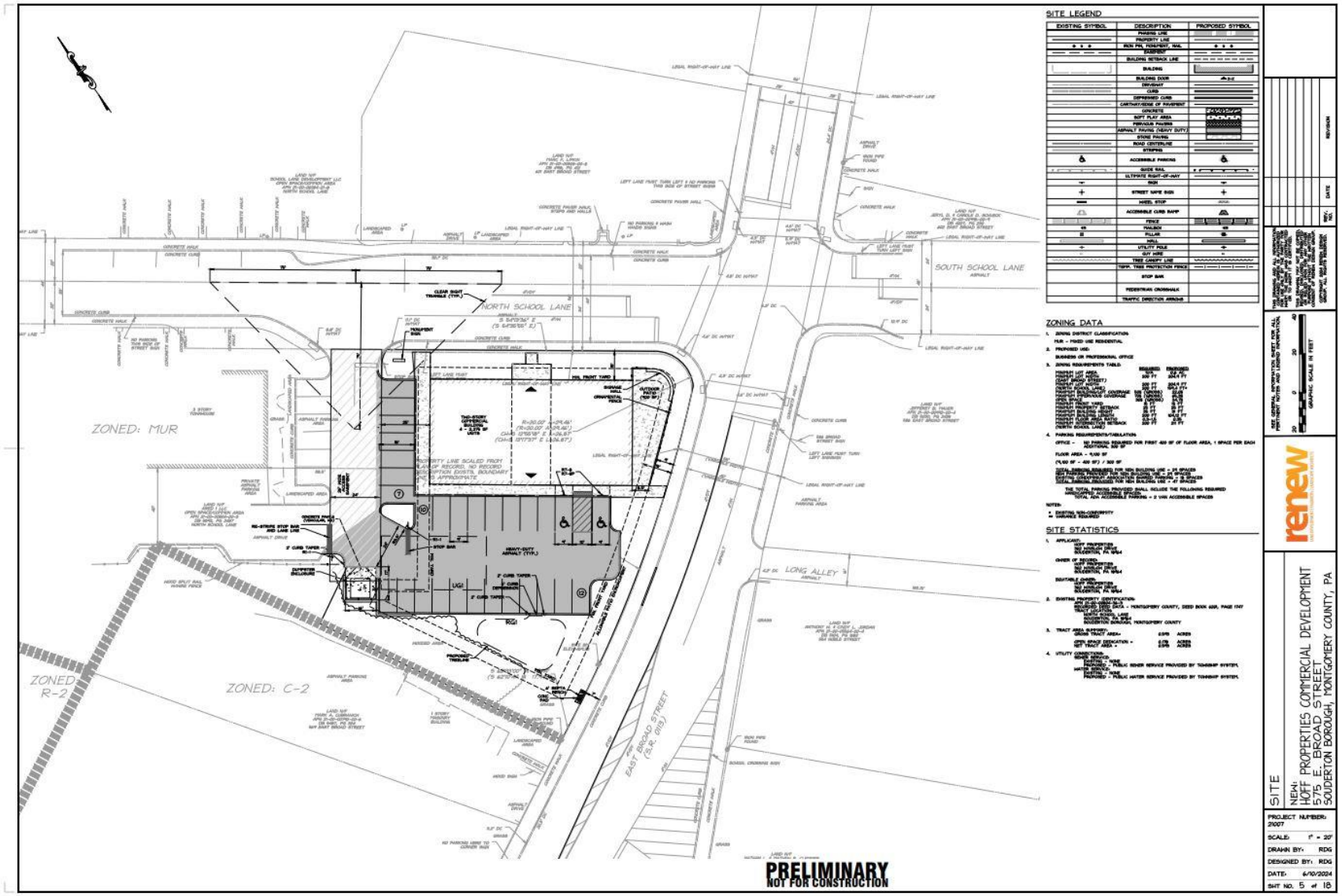
Sincerely,

Chloe Mohr, AICP, Principal Planner
chloe.mohr@montgomerycountypa.gov – (610) 278-3739

c: Kyle Hoff, Applicant
Ed Huber, PLS, Chair, Municipal Planning Commission
Geoffrey Attanasio, P.E., Borough Engineer
Scott Burton, PennDOT
Harry Free, PennDOT
Tim Stevenson, PennDOT
Michael McGahee, SEPTA
Harley Cooper, SEPTA
Jessica Buck, District Manager, Montgomery County Conservation District
Matt Lubitz, Senior Community Planner, Montgomery County Planning Commission

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

ATTACHMENTS A & B





575 East Broad Street
MCPC#240204001