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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Date: May 9, 2025

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

Re: MCPC #24-0041-003
Plan Name: 2425 Maryland Road
(53 dwelling units on 1 parcel comprising approximately 10.05 acres)
Situate: 2425 & 2405 Maryland Road (cross street: Computer Avenue)
Upper Moreland Township

Dear Mr. Purtell:

We have reviewed the above-referenced subdivision and land development in accordance with Section 609 of Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code," as you requested on April 28, 2025. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, 2425 Maryland Road Property Owner, LLC, is proposing a new apartment building consisting of 53 dwelling units. The property would be consolidated with the adjacent parcel located at 2405 Maryland Road to allow for the expansion of the Willow Pointe development.

The property is located in the I-Limited Industrial Zoning District and currently contains an existing one-story industrial building, which would be demolished. The proposed apartment building would have a footprint of 16,570 square feet. The development would provide 80 parking spaces, including 50 surface parking spaces and 30 parking spaces on the ground floor of the building. We reviewed a previous submission for this property in a letter dated March 13, 2024 and September 4, 2024.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

The proposal is generally consistent with the county's comprehensive plan*, MONTCO 2040: A Shared Vision,* which shows the proposed area as "Business Area" future land use category. Business Areas are concentrations of employment-oriented land uses. Residential uses in Business Areas should not be placed next to industrial uses that could create nuisances for the residents. The project is also generally consistent with the *Upper*

Moreland 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The proposal is located in the "Employment Center" future land use category of the township comprehensive plan. The future land use plan states that appropriate uses include industrial, office, research and development, and multifamily residential. Pedestrian connections are important for this area and should support the future expansion of the Power Line and Cross County Trails.

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 township may wish to consider prior to final plan approval. Our comments are as follows:

REVIEW COMMENTS

BUILDING DESIGN

A. Blank Walls. We recommend increasing the number and size of the openings at ground level to visually break up the façade and for better ventilation. The ground floor of the apartment building is proposed to be used for structured parking and storage. Based on the façade elevations provided, the exterior of the ground floor appears to have limited window and door openings, which detracts from the building's appearance and can negatively impact air quality in the parking area.

PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY

A. Sidewalk. We reiterate the recommendation that the sidewalk be continued along the front of the building (the front facing Maryland Road). There is a walkway directly up the front entrance of the building, but there does not appear to be an easy pedestrian connection from the front to the back of the building, without going through the building or walking in the driveway or parking lot. The addition of a walkway along the western side of the building would have the benefit of activating the side of the building where there is street parking and improving the connections to the amenity area.

B. Crosswalks. A sidewalk is proposed along Maryland Road, which will greatly improve the pedestrian connectivity in the area. The sidewalk would cross the proposed driveway, where there would be ADA accessible ramps with detectable warning pads. A detectable warning pad is the tactile strip that is meant to guide movement for persons of all levels of mobility. The detectable strips should be installed to be perpendicular to the crosswalk.

1. *Driveway Apron*. We recommend that the applicant design the sidewalk and driveway apron in such a way that it is accessible and highly visible. We suggest using the same material for the sidewalk across the driveway apron and ensuring that it is level for people walking or rolling. These design strategies will signal a continuation of the pedestrian area. The picture to the right illustrates how a sidewalk can be continued across a driveway entrance. While the paint has faded with use, the pedestrian crossing is still clear and level.



C. Cross County Trail. The Power Line Trail will have a spur located approximately 0.1 mile from the property that will connect to the Cross County Trail East (CCT). A portion of the CCT was constructed as part of the Willow Pointe development and, when constructed, the trail will continue, parallel the turnpike, ultimately connecting to the Pennypack Trail. While the construction of these two regionally significant trails is a long-term project that will not begin for a few years, we suggest that the applicant consider how future residents will best be served by this trail asset. We recommend considering how internal pedestrian connections and wayfinding signage could help to direct people to and promote use of the trail.

LANDSCAPING

A. Proposed Plant Schedule. The landscape plan proposes 43 Doublefile Viburnum (Viburnum plicatum tomentosum) to be planted along the front façade of the building. However, Doublefile Viburbum is considered invasive in Pennsylvania and can spread aggressively, especially in woodland areas. We recommend the applicant consider alternative shrubs, such as other species of Vibernum, for foundation plantings to provide the coverage without the concern of overtaking native plants.

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 multifamily residential 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. A paper copy bearing the municipal seal and signature of approval must be supplied for our files. Please print the assigned MCPC number (24-0041-003) on any plans submitted for final recording.

Sincerely,



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

c: Christopher Fairfield, Applicant's Representative
Brian C. Conlon, Applicant's Engineer
Patrick Stasio, Manager, Upper Moreland Township
Jennifer Mullen, APA Vice Chair, Upper Moreland Township

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

ATTACHMENTS A & B

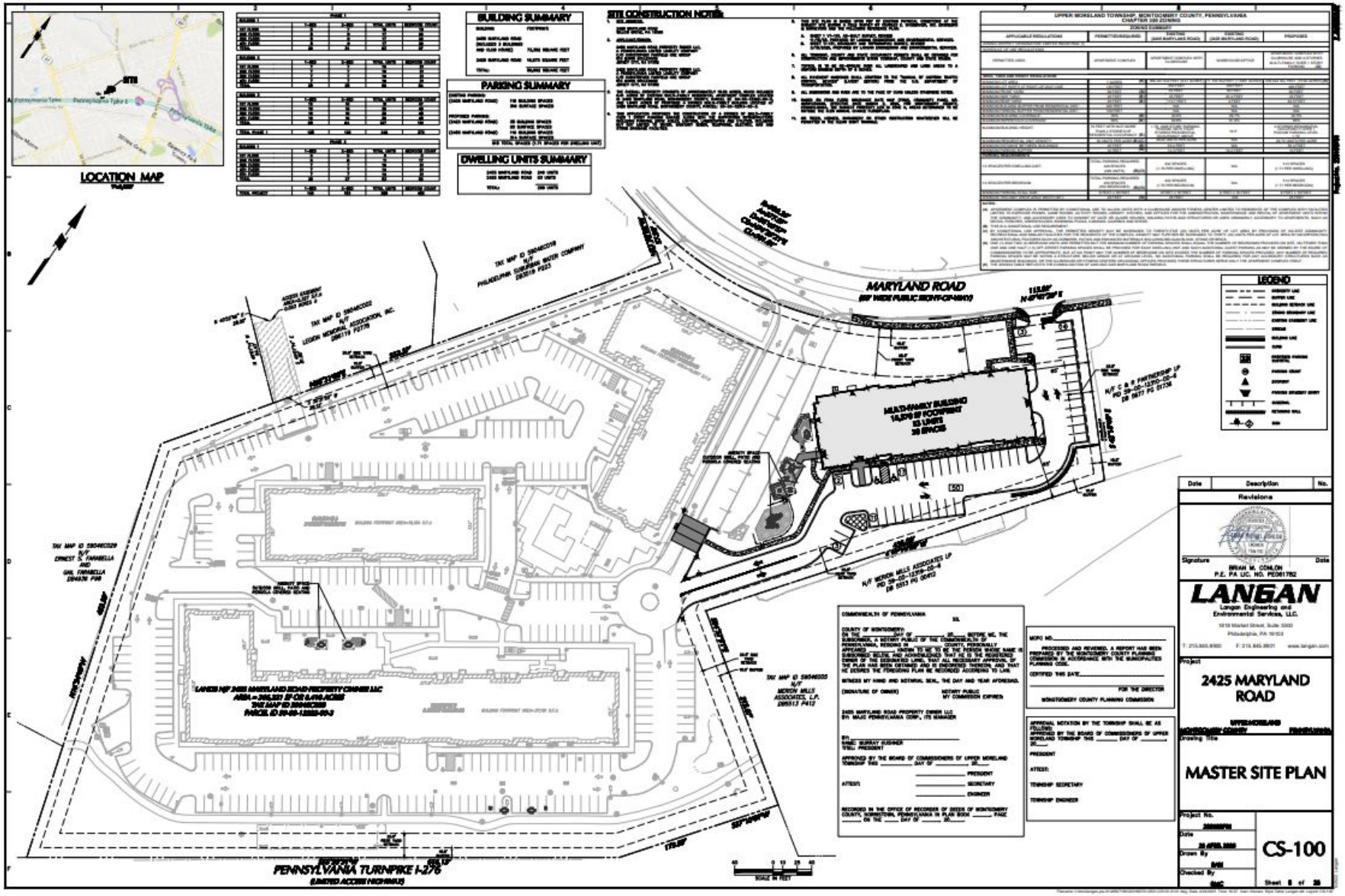


2425 Maryland Road
MCPC#240041003

Montgomery County Planning Commission

0 100 200 400 Feet

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LOCATION MAP
BUILDING SUMMARY
PARKING SUMMARY
DWELLING UNITS SUMMARY
SITE CONSTRUCTION NOTES
MARYLAND ROAD
MULTI-FAMILY BUILDING
14,270 SF FOOTPRINT
83 UNITS
98 SPACES
LEGEND
PENNSYLVANIA TURNPIKE I-276
(LIMITED ACCESS HIGHWAY)
SCALE IN FEET
Revisions
LANGAN
Langan Engineering and Environmental Services, LLC.
2425 MARYLAND ROAD
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA
MASTER SITE PLAN
CS-100