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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

September 9, 2025

Mr. Henry Sekawungu, Director of Planning and Zoning
Cheltenham Township
8230 Old York Road
Elkins Park, Pennsylvania 19027

Re: MCPC #25-0162-001
Plan Name: Foxlane Homes – Hansen Tract
(1 lot comprising 10.43 acres)
Situate: 1777 Willow Grove Avenue; Willow Grove Avenue at Laverock Road
Cheltenham Township

Dear Mr. Sekawungu:

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 August 8, 2025. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Foxlane Homes at Willow Grove, LP, proposes to develop 43 townhomes and one detached home on two adjacent parcels, one in Cheltenham Township and one in Springfield Township. The Cheltenham parcel (31-00-29056-00-1) is a vacant parcel of 10.4 acres and has frontage along Willow Grove Avenue. The Springfield parcel (52-00-18514-10-9) is 2.7 acres with four structures on it and takes access through the parcel in Cheltenham to Willow Grove Avenue.

At one time, this site was part of a 40+ acre estate that was located in both Cheltenham and Springfield Townships. The original estate was first known as “Falcon Hill,” then later as “Laverock Hill.” The majority of this site was developed in 2021 and 2022 in Springfield Township with 32 single-family detached homes, trails, and an open space area, with access off of Newbold Street.

The proposed 43 townhomes in Cheltenham Township are permitted by a variance granted by Cheltenham Township’s Zoning Hearing Board in January 2025, to allow the townhome use in the R-1 Residential Zoning District. A number of other variances were also granted at this time, including for impervious coverage, location of garages, separation between buildings, and front yard setbacks.

The one single-family detached home proposed on the Springfield Township part of this proposal will require the demolition of several buildings that appear to date back to the time of the original estate.

RECOMMENDATION

The Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) generally supports the applicant's proposal. However, there are several key issues that we hope the applicant and the township can resolve prior to plan approval. Our comments are as follows:

REVIEW COMMENTS

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

A. Montgomery County. Montgomery County's Comprehensive Plan, *Montco 2040: A Shared Vision*, adopted in 2015, identifies this site as suburban residential, which includes a variety of residential housing types. This proposal is consistent with this designation. Note that Montgomery County is in the process of developing a new comprehensive plan that will have a new future land use map.

B. Cheltenham Township. Cheltenham Township's Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2005, identifies this area as "single-family detached/attached residential" on the future land use map, which includes townhomes. The plan also notes the Falcon Hill property as an important historic site. Cheltenham Township is in the process of developing a new comprehensive plan. The draft plan designates this area as "suburban residential." The portion of this proposal in Cheltenham Township is consistent with the township's adopted comprehensive plan and the draft comprehensive plan.

CRESHEIM TRAIL

A. Circuit Trails. The site where this development is proposed includes a portion of a planned trail that is a part of the Circuit Trails Network. "When we connect the 860+ miles of the Circuit Trails, Greater Philadelphia will have a trail network unlike any other in the country—connecting the urban, suburban and rural communities of one of the largest metropolitan regions in the U.S." (https://circuittrails.org/what-is-the-circuit/) This future trail will not only be important to the residents of this development, the nearby neighbors, Cheltenham Township, and Montgomery County—it is also an essential part of the entire Philadelphia Region's future transportation system. A portion of the Cresheim Trail was developed on the Springfield Township part of this original property. The trail is envisioned to continue through this property and cross Willow Grove Avenue, eventually continuing on the other side. The approximate alignment is where an existing driveway is proposed to become part of a new road serving this development.

B. Subdivision and Land Development Requirements for Trails. Section 42 of Cheltenham Township's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance contains several regulations pertaining to existing or proposed trails.

1. The ordinance requires that the applicant allow for a public access trail as shown in the township's planning documents. (§260-42.A) The Cresheim Trail is indicated in the following documents adopted by the township:

    a. Cresheim Trail Feasibility Study (2008)
    b. Cheltenham Township Open Space Plan (2006)
    c. Cheltenham Township Comprehensive Plan (2005)

2. The ordinance requires that permanent access easements shall be provided at 20 feet wide. (§260-42.F) We recommend these easements be shown on the plan.

3. The ordinance requires that permanent access easements shall be provided at 20 feet wide. (§260-42.F) We recommend these easements be shown on the plan.

4. The ordinance requires that multi-use trails be constructed at 10 feet wide and have 5 feet of cleared area on either side. (§260-42.B.(1))

C. Design. Circuit Trails must meet specific criteria in order to be included as part of the system, including a paved surface (e.g., asphalt or compacted stone), multi-purpose (bike and pedestrian), and a minimum of 10 feet in width. Circuit Trails are also intended to be "off" road, meaning they are separated from road traffic. All segments of the Cresheim Trail constructed as part of the Foxlane Homes project should meet Circuit Trail standards: paved, multi-purpose, off road, and a minimum of 10 feet in width.

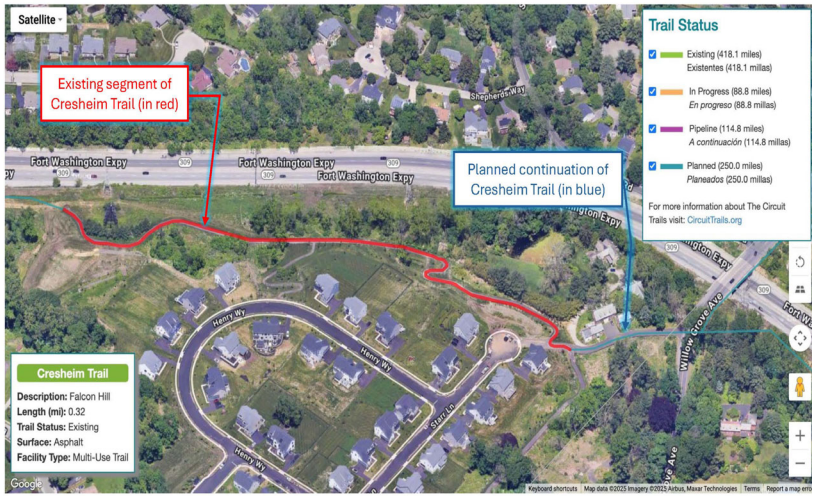
D. Alignment. As shown in the map at right, a 0.32-mile segment of the Cresheim Trail was constructed as part of the development to the northwest of this site. At the eastern extent of the existing segment, the trail takes the form of a curvilinear crosswalk that ultimately connects to a local trail segment that continues south along the east side of the existing development. Therefore, the curvilinear crosswalk represents the eastern terminus of this Cresheim Trail segment which is immediately adjacent to the property now proposed for development.

Existing Segment of Cresheim Trail (west/north of Hansen Tract)



The Circuit Trail Network map shows the Cresheim Trail continuing through the northern portion of the current proposed development (shown in blue at right) and then crossing over Willow Grove Avenue where it will then head east and south toward the City of Philadelphia. Since the future Cresheim Trail needs to cross through Foxlane Homes to continue its alignment toward Philadelphia, we have the following specific recommendations to accommodate the trail through the proposed development:

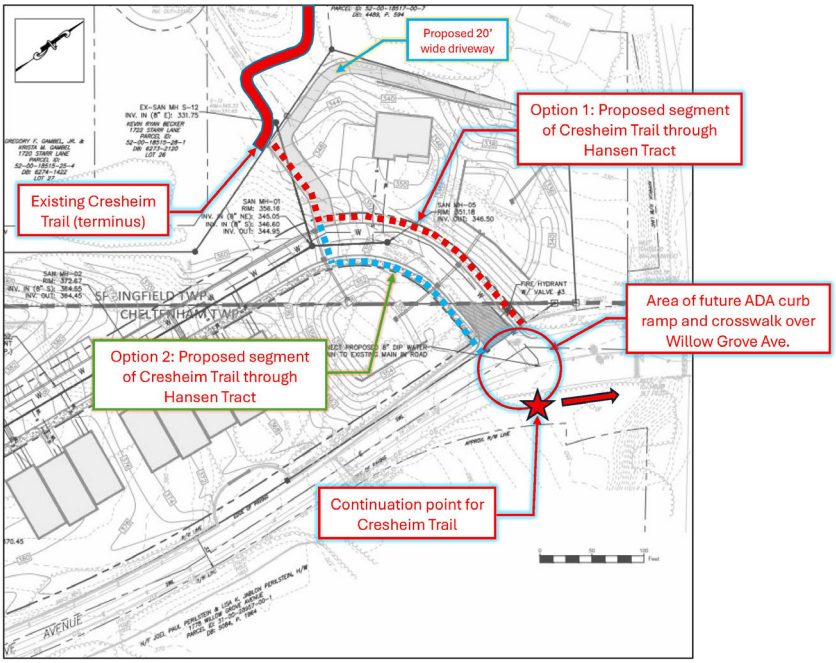
Existing Segment of Cresheim Trail (northwest of Hansen Tract)



1. From the existing curvilinear crosswalk, the Cresheim Trail should extend east down the "Proposed 20' wide driveway" located to the south of the proposed single-family residence located in Springfield Township. This segment of the trail should either be adjacent to the 20-foot wide driveway, or, since this driveway is likely to see any significant traffic flow, a painted 10-foot wide bike lane down one side of the driveway would suffice.

2. Once the trail reaches the development's interior road-way, we have shown two options. Option 1 takes the Cresheim Trail along the north side of the proposed interior roadway to its intersection with Willow Grove Avenue. Option 2 takes the trail across the interior roadway (via a crosswalk) and runs along the south side of the interior roadway to its inter-section with Willow Grove Avenue. A proposed sidewalk is also shown on the south side of the interior roadway. If Option 2 is pursued, the portion of the sidewalk that would serve as the Cresheim Trail should be widened to 10-12 feet to meet Circuit Trail standards.

Cresheim Trail Options through Foxlane Homes Development



3. A future trail crossing across Willow Grove Avenue will be needed so the Cresheim Trail can continue its route toward Philadelphia. The future crosswalk may need signalization or rectangular rapid flashing beacons when the crossing is installed. The intersection design should allow for these to be added in the future.

D. Coordination. Because of the regional importance of the Cresheim Trail, we recommend the applicant coordinate with other entities involved with the development of this portion of the Circuit Trails, especially the Friends of the Cresheim Trail, but also the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, PennDOT, and Montgomery County Planning Commission. As a part of the regional Circuit Trails Network, the Cresheim Trail will help link up this system of more than 850 miles of trails that extends throughout the greater Philadelphia region. Currently, approximately 450 miles of the Circuit Trails Network is constructed. The residents of this development will benefit by being connected to this extensive network.

PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICLE CIRCULATION AND PARKING

A. Perpendicular Parking. The applicant proposes 52 parking spaces along the new proposed road interior to the development. All of these spaces are designed to be perpendicular to the travel lanes. Fifteen of these spaces are located on a curved portion of the road. Cheltenham Township places some limitations on the types of parking that are permitted along streets. In particular, “Perpendicular parking shall not be permitted along public or private streets.” (§260-59.A.(5)). The applicant will likely need to pursue a waiver from this requirement.

1. Location. We suggest that, if approved, the applicant attempt to move the spaces on the inside of the curved portion of the road to the other side of the road, as there is better visibility for cars backing up from the outside of the curve.

2. Design. Since perpendicular parking is not ordinarily permitted on streets, we recommend that if this parking configuration is approved, the applicant be required to follow the requirements for perpendicular parking in parking lots, including:

   a. Landscaping. Every row of parking spaces should include a landscaped area of at least 162 square feet with 85% ground coverage of shrubs or grasses. (§260.50.(F).(3))

   b. Relationship to Sidewalk. Wheel stops or a two-foot increase in sidewalk width should be included to ensure adequate sidewalk space without car overhang, per §260.59.(C).(2).

   c. Handicapped Parking. ADA compliant spaces are required to be included per §260.59.(B).(5).

   d. Electric Vehicle Charging Spaces. Two spaces are required per every 50 parking spaces. (§260.59.(B).(7).

   e. Bicycle Parking. One bicycle parking space is required for every 20 vehicle parking spaces. With the development of the Cresheim Trail, we anticipate bicycle parking may become very popular. (§295-2301.(D).(4)).

B. Design of Intersections. The proposed new road will intersect with Willow Grove Avenue twice. As this is a high volume roadway with a curve at this location, we suggest the applicant work with PennDOT to include safety features that will reduce crashes at these new intersections. In addition, as mentioned above, the intersection closer to PA-309 should allow space for the infrastructure that may be needed for the future trail crossing.

C. Sidewalk. No sidewalk is proposed along the property frontage. The brick wall located along the roadway is proposed to be retained, which does not allow space for the sidewalk. However, sidewalk is proposed through the development, providing an alternate pathway for pedestrians to follow that is safer than walking between the brick wall and moving traffic. We suggest that the entrances to the new development be as welcoming as possible to pedestrians who may just be passing by, so that they are encouraged to take this safer route. We support preserving the attractive brick wall and hope that the applicant will make it clear that pedestrians can walk on the sidewalk through the development to continue on their journey along Willow Grove Avenue.

LANDSCAPING AND OPEN SPACE

A. Landscaping. The landscaping plan submitted provides extensive plantings. However, it would be beneficial if more trees could be added in front of the homes, if possible. Note that there is a requirement for 12-inch planting strips between the driveways of townhomes. (§295-405.G.(7).(e)).

B. Community Open Space. Although community open space and recreational amenities are not required, we recommend the applicant consider whether a small gathering area or even a tot lot can be provided on this site for the residents. It will improve the desirability and livability of the development.

C. Stormwater Basin Location. One of the proposed stormwater basins is located partially in Springfield Township and partially in Cheltenham Township. Because of the need for municipalities to monitor stormwater basin maintenance over time, we suggest the applicant shift the location slightly so that the basin is only in one municipality for ease of coordination. We also note the need for coordination with Springfield Township on this plan in general, as it is located in both municipalities. We recommend the same set of plans be submitted simultaneously to both Cheltenham and Springfield Townships.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND BUILDING DESIGN

A. Plan Consistency. On the existing conditions plan, four buildings are shown on the portion of the development tract in Springfield Township. Three of those are marked as "to be removed." However, on most of the other plan sheets, the fourth building is also removed. The applicant should correct the plan sheets for consistency.

B. Historic Preservation. We note that the buildings proposed to be demolished are historic in nature and would be valuable to preserve. We suggest the applicant revisit this plan to see if any of those can be adaptively reused for residential purposes.

C. Townhouse Design. As the applicant has already obtained a number of waivers related to layout and design, we recommend the applicant consult our Townhouse Design Guidebook for recommendations on details that will help to make this an attractive townhome community.

CONCLUSION

We wish to reiterate that MCPC generally supports the applicant's proposal. 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 (*#25-0162-001*) on any plans submitted for final recording.

Sincerely,

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

c: John Rathfon, Applicant's Representative
Alyson Elliott, Township Manager
Thomas Cross, Chair, Township Planning Commission
Roger A. Phillips, P.E., Township Engineer
Brad Maule, Executive Director, Friends of the Cresheim Trail
Chris Gale, Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
Shawn Megill Legendra, AICP, Regional Trails Program Manager, DVRPC
Megan McNish, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
Margaux Petruska, Community Planner, Montgomery County Planning Commission
Adam Schantz, Community Planner, Montgomery County Planning Commission
Jessica Buck, District Manager, Montgomery County Conservation District
John Gallagher, PennDOT
Paul Lutz, PennDOT
Fran Hanney, PennDOT

Attachment A: Aerial Image of Site
Attachment B: Reduced Copy of Applicant's Proposed Site Plan
Attachment C: Cresheim Trail Maps

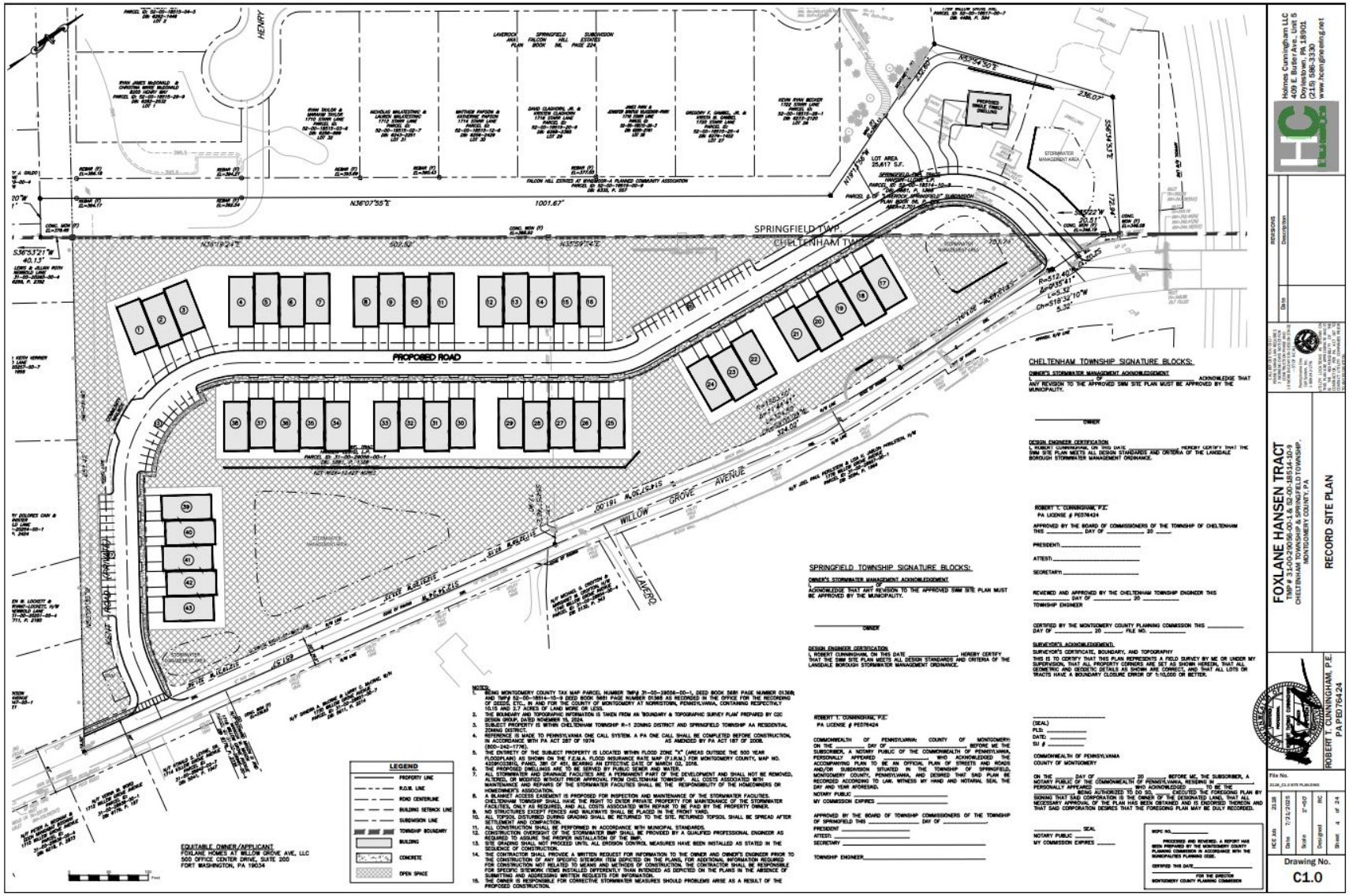


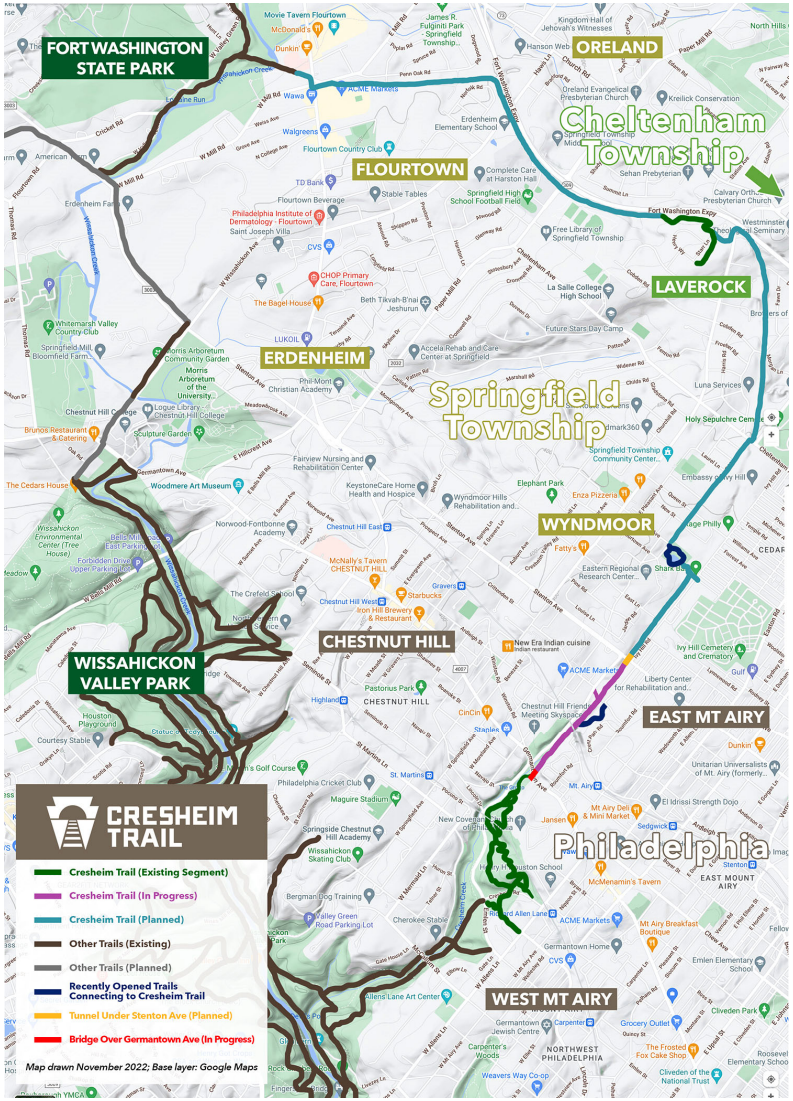
Foxlane Homes - Hansen Tract
MCPC#250162001

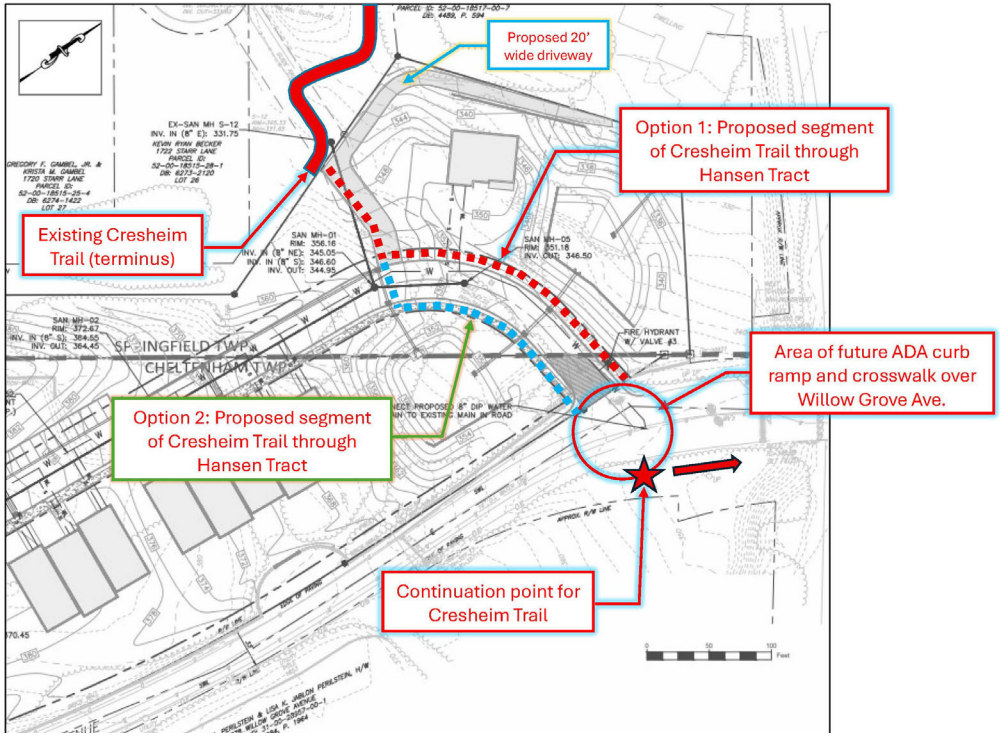
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(p) 610 278-3722 (f) 610 278-3941
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Aerial photography provided by Nearmap

0 150 300 600 Feet

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HENRY
PROPOSED ROAD
WILLOW GROVE AVENUE
SPRINGFIELD TWP.
CHELTENHAM TWP.
LOT AREA 25,617 S.F.
PROPOSED SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING
STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AREA
LEGEND
PROPERTY LINE
R.O.W. LINE
ROAD CENTERLINE
BUILDING SETBACK LINE
SUBDIVISION LINE
TOWNSHIP BOUNDARY
BUILDING
CONCRETE
OPEN SPACE
EQUITABLE OWNER/APPLICANT
FOXLANE HOMES AT WILLOW GROVE AVE, LLC
500 OFFICE CENTER DRIVE, SUITE 200
FORT WASHINGTON, PA 19034
CHELTENHAM TOWNSHIP SIGNATURE BLOCKS:
SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP SIGNATURE BLOCKS:
NOTES:
Holmes Cunningham LLC
409 E. Butler Ave. Unit 5
Doylestown, PA 18901
(215) 586-3330
www.hcengineering.net
FOXLANE HANSEN TRACT
TWP # 31-00-29056-00-1 & 52-00-18514-10-9
CHELTENHAM TOWNSHIP & SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP,
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PA
RECORD SITE PLAN
ROBERT T. CUNNINGHAM, P.E.
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C1.0


FORT WASHINGTON STATE PARK
ORELAND
Cheltenham Township
FLOURTOWN
LAVEROCK
ERDENHEIM
Springfield Township
WYNDMOOR
CHESTNUT HILL
WISSAHICKON VALLEY PARK
EAST MT AIRY
Philadelphia
WEST MT AIRY
CRESHEIM TRAIL
Cresheim Trail (Existing Segment)
Cresheim Trail (In Progress)
Cresheim Trail (Planned)
Other Trails (Existing)
Other Trails (Planned)
Recently Opened Trails Connecting to Cresheim Trail
Tunnel Under Stenton Ave (Planned)
Bridge Over Germantown Ave (In Progress)
Map drawn November 2022; Base layer: Google Maps


Proposed 20' wide driveway
Option 1: Proposed segment of Cresheim Trail through Hansen Tract
Existing Cresheim Trail (terminus)
Area of future ADA curb ramp and crosswalk over Willow Grove Ave.
Option 2: Proposed segment of Cresheim Trail through Hansen Tract
Continuation point for Cresheim Trail