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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

October 10, 2025

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

Re: MCPC #25-0039-002
Plan Name: The Enclave at Melrose Phase 2
(2 lots comprising 115 acres)
Situate: Tookany Creek Parkway and Ashmead Road
Cheltenham Township

Dear Mr. Sekawungu:

We have reviewed the above-referenced preliminary land development plan in accordance with Section 502 of Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code," as you requested on September 10, 2025. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Melrose Development, LLC, has submitted a Preliminary/Final Plan for Phase 2 of the redevelopment of a former golf course, the Melrose Country Club. The full 115-acre site (parcels 31-00-01258-00-7 and 31-00-01255-23-5) is proposed to be transformed into a mix of residential, institutional, commercial, and community uses. The residential component consists of 172 townhomes, 134 age-restricted townhomes, and 24 age-restricted apartment units. In addition, the residential components of the institutional uses consist of 80 assisted living apartments and 30 traumatic brain injury care living units. The applicant also proposes a community center with a pool, a medical office building, and commercial retail in six buildings. Three public plazas are included, totaling 106,103 square feet. The other remaining open space is 43 acres.

Phase 2 of the plan proposes the 3-story assisted living facility (88,000 gross square feet), the 4-story medical office building (247,760 gross square feet), and a 2-story parking structure adjacent to the medical office building.

This development is located in the MU-3 Mixed Use Zoning District. The MU-3 district has base zoning along with three classes of special exception uses. This development is a Class 3 use, with special exception approval received from the zoning hearing board on October 30, 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

The Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) generally supports the applicant's proposal; however, in the course of our review we have identified a number of key issues that we believe should be resolved prior to final plan approval. Our comments are as follows:

REVIEW COMMENTS

ZONING

A. Compliance with MU-3 Zoning District Class 3 Special Exception Standards.

Per §295-1505.D(7) in Ordinance #2473-24, the maximum building height for Class 3 uses permitted by special exception is three stories for a flat roofed building. "Where a non-residential use building is completely located within a 1,500-foot radius of a regional rail station, building height may be increased to a maximum of four stories for a flat roofed building or 60 feet when measured to a point between the highest and lowest point of the main roof for all other roof types."

The medical office building is located within 1,500 feet of SEPTA's Lawndale Regional Rail Train Station in distance. Proximity to passenger rail will be a significant benefit to those working at the medical office facility and residents of the proposed development. However, at present the station cannot be accessed from the Cheltenham side. In order to access the Lawndale Station currently, employees and residents of the proposed site would need to walk north on Tookany Creek Parkway, take a right on Ashmead Road to cross the train tracks into Philadelphia, and proceed to the station access point off of Devereaux Road. Google Maps estimates this to be a distance of one mile (5,280 feet) from where the medical office building is proposed, as shown in figure 4.

In order to be in compliance with the intent of the 1,500-foot radius requirement in §295-1505.D.(7)(a) that is to provide walkable access to a regional rail station and thereby be permitted to develop the medical office building up to four floors as shown on the plan, we recommend the applicant make improvements to Lawndale Station to accommodate access to the station platform from the Cheltenham side in collaboration with SEPTA. This could involve a short-term solution such as building steps from the designated station pickup circle off of Road H on the plan to the station platform and removing the existing fencing shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3: Existing conditions at Lawndale Station, looking towards Melrose Country Club.

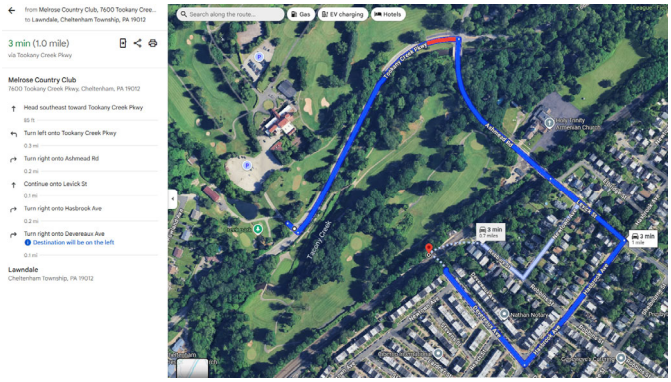


Figure 4: Existing walking route to access Lawndale Station.

ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

A. Assisted Living Building.

1. We recommend that the applicant consider the architecture of the building from Road C and ensure that the building fits in contextually with the townhomes across Road C. Materials used should be the same or complementary with those used for the townhomes.

2. We also recommend a seating area with supportive benches and picnic tables for residents to enjoy the outdoors near the back entrance to the facility.

B. Chain-Link Fence. We note the chain-link fence around the Traumatic Brain Injury area on the plan set.

1. The maximum height of a fence between a street and a building is 4 feet. (§295-405.A.(6)(a)) The chain-link fence is shown on the plan at 6 feet high, even between Road C and the buildings. The applicant may need a variance from this requirement.

2. Chain-link fences are not generally considered attractive features. We wonder if the applicant might consider alternative fencing styles along Road C where the fence will be most visible from adjacent uses. The development would be more attractive if another fence style is installed.

LANDSCAPING

A. Assisted Living Property.

1. While the landscaping requirements are met for the larger site, the Assisted Living facility has four grassy areas without any plantings. We recommend additional trees and shrubs be added to the lawn area, which will be both aesthetically pleasing and slow stormwater runoff from the steep grades of the property, particularly if located along the walkways to each building entrance.

2. There are nine trees proposed to shade the parking lot of the Assisted Living facility, meeting the zoning requirement for the lot. However, two of the trees along the parking lot are Pin Oak trees, which, while native, are not appropriate because they produce acorns that pose a tripping hazard and their branches point downwards. We instead recommend planting native shade trees in the parking area that do not produce nuts, such as Bloodgood London Planetrees from Cheltenham's List of Approved Plants in Chapter 260, Attachment 1, Appendix A. There are seven additional Pin Oaks proposed in the surface parking lots adjacent to the medical office building and parking structure that should also be replaced with an alternative species such as Bloodgood London Planetrees.

B. Medical Office Building.

1. Steep slopes are located south of the storm sewer pipes on the west side of the building and southeast of the adjacent surface parking lot. Stormwater runoff will flow down to the Tookany Creek Parkway and Tacony Creek. We recommend a vegetated buffer of shrub plantings in both areas to infiltrate and slow some of the stormwater runoff prior to it flowing into the emergency spillway and, ultimately, the Tacony Creek.

CONCLUSION

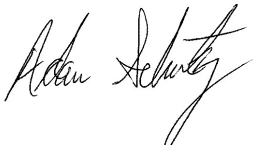
We wish to reiterate that MCPC generally supports the redevelopment of Melrose Country Club into a vibrant mixed use community. However, we urge the township and the applicant to consider our suggestions for Phase

2 in order to better meet Cheltenham Township's objectives for mixed use redevelopment and create a better community to integrate with the surrounding area.

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 (*#25-0039-002*) on any plans submitted for final recording.

Sincerely,



Adam Schantz, Community Planner
Adam.Schantz@MontgomeryCountyPA.gov – 610-278-3739

c: Joseph Byrne, Applicant
Anthony Caponigro, P.E., Applicant's Representative
Alyson Elliott, Township Manager
Thomas Cross, Chair, Township Planning Commission
Roger A. Phillips, P.E., Township Engineer
Edward Diasio, Township Solicitor
Chloe Mohr, AICP, Principal Planner, Montgomery County Planning Commission
Michael McGahee, SEPTA
Jennifer Dougherty, AICP, SEPTA
Harley Cooper, SEPTA

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

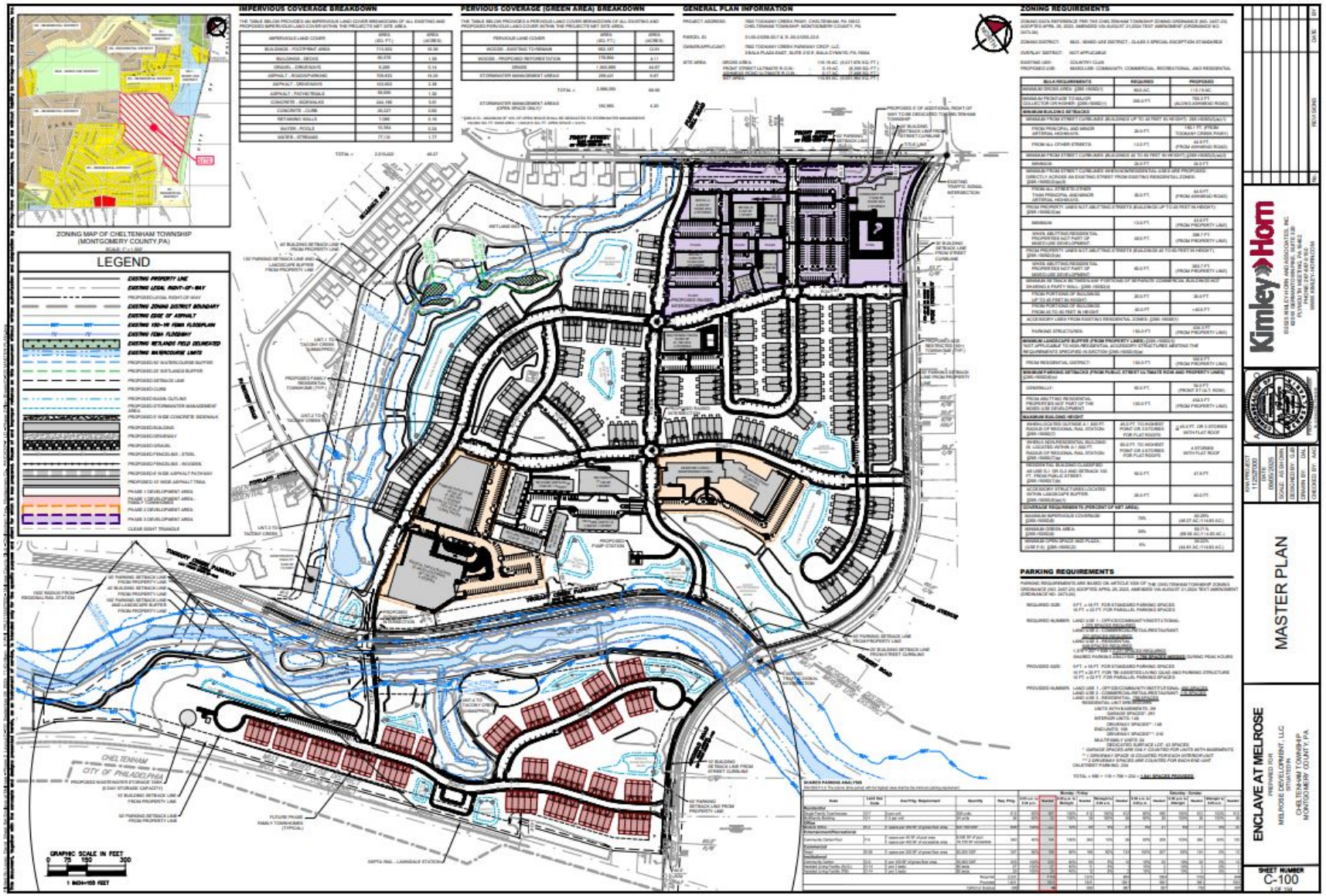


Enclave at Melrose Phase 2
MCPC#250039002

Montgomery County Planning Commission

0 350 700 1,400 Feet

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IMPERVIOUS COVERAGE BREAKDOWN
PERVIOUS COVERAGE (GREEN AREA) BREAKDOWN
GENERAL PLAN INFORMATION
ZONING REQUIREMENTS
PARKING REQUIREMENTS
ZONING MAP OF CHELTENHAM TOWNSHIP (MONTGOMERY COUNTY,PA)
LEGEND
GRAPHIC SCALE IN FEET
1 INCH=150 FEET
Kimley»Horn
MASTER PLAN
ENCLAVE AT MELROSE
MELROSE DEVELOPMENT, LLC
CHELTENHAM TOWNSHIP
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PA
SHEET NUMBER
C-100