MONTGOMERY COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

NEIL K. MAKHIJA, CHAIR
JAMILA H. WINDER, VICE CHAIR
THOMAS DIBELLO, COMMISSIONER

WWW.MONTGOMERYCOUNTYPA.GOV

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION

MONTGOMERY COUNTY • PO BOX 311
NORRISTOWN, PA 19404-0311

610-278-3722
PLANNING@MONTGOMERYCOUNTYPA.GOV

SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

October 27, 2025

SUBJECT: MCPC #25-0197-001 – 240 W. Johnson Highway Sketch Plan Review

TO: Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning and Development
Municipality of Norristown

FROM: Donna Fabry, Principal Trails and Open Space Planner

We have reviewed the above-referenced sketch plan as you requested on September 15, 2025. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, 240 W. Johnson LLC, is proposing to construct a 4-story, 50-unit residential building on a 1.52-acre lot adjacent to the Studio Center tract that is anchored by the PennDOT Driver License Center building. The site is located within the Municipality's Commercial-Retail (C-R) zoning district. The proposed building will have a full basement and roof access. Sixty-eight parking spaces are proposed on the site.

The site's existing conditions include: a 1½-story single-family detached dwelling, a shed, and a paved driveway, which will be demolished. There are a number of mature trees creating a wooded area that would also be removed.

REVIEW COMMENTS

Residential Use Incongruent with Zoning

The C-R zoning district does not permit any residential use. Section 320-85 states that the legislative intent of this district is to provide for a variety of goods and services that are typically located in larger commercial/retail centers to the Municipality's residents. This residential use would be incompatible with the surrounding commercial and retail properties and we recommend that the Municipality encourage the developer to consider a proposal for this location that is consistent with the requirements of the Code.

Juniper Street

The area identified as the driveway for this property is identified on Google Maps as Juniper Street. Juniper Street exists further south and intersects with West Roberts Street, West Brown Street, West Freedley Street, and terminates at West Fornance Street. With consideration to future development of this site, the Municipality may want to consider whether this driveway should be considered a continuation of Juniper Street and brought up to the local road standards identified in the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) Section 282-421, Street Classifications. Turning the driveway into a dedicated municipal street would provide an additional access to the PennDOT facility and enhance traffic circulation.

Density

The density proposed under this plan results in 32 units per acre, which is higher than the zoning code permits for any district where density is regulated in the zoning code. The highest density cited in the code is 24 units per acre per Section 320-69, Multifamily redevelopment option.

Impervous Coverage

The apartment building, driveway, and off-street parking proposed for this site result in 65% impervious coverage for this site. The lowest amount of impervious surface permitted in the C-R district is 65%, which applies to Class III uses. The uses defined as Class III include: shopping centers, lawn and garden centers, nursery or greenhouse, health clubs and indoor recreation, movie theaters, and automobile dealerships. These types of uses require space for facilities to accommodate inventory or a large number of patrons at the same time, resulting in the need for more parking spaces than average, which creates a greater area of impervious surface.

To comply with MS4 requirements and to reduce the urban heat island effect, we encourage the Municipality to consider having the applicant incorporate green stormwater management practices, such as rain garden basins, bioretention facilities in the parking areas, and other mitigation measures that are identified in MCPC's *Sustainable Green Parking Lots Guidebook*.

Consistency With Montco 2040 Comprehensive Plan

The county's comprehensive plan, *Montco 2040: A Shared Vision,* identifies the future use for this site as Community Mixed Use. Should it be willing to accommodate a residential use at this location, the Municipality may want to consider requiring the applicant incorporate ground floor retail, commercial, or office space to be compatible with the intent of the district and existing adjacent uses.

CONCLUSION

Please note that the review comments and recommendations contained within are advisory to the municipality and final disposition for the approval of any proposal will be made by the municipality.

Sincerely,

Donna Fabry

Donna Fabry, CFM, Principal Open Space Planner
Donna.fabry@montgomerycountypa.gov – 610-278-3445

c: Chris Smitelli, Applicant's Representative
Rich Villa, Applicant's Representative