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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

January 9, 2026

Mr. Christopher Hoffman, Township Manager
Lower Moreland Township
640 Red Lion Road
Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania 19006-6234

Re: MCPC #24-0148-003
Plan: 3993 Huntingdon Pike- Sketch Plan
Situate: Huntingdon PIke/County Line Road
Lower Moreland Township

Dear Mr. Hoffman:

We have reviewed the above-referenced revised sketch plan submission as requested by the township in an electronic submission received on December 4, 2025. We forward this memo as a report of our review comments and concerns.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Hightop Real Estate & Development, LLC, proposes redeveloping the existing site with the office building into a mixed-use development. The plan proposes a 4-story, +/- 72,000-square foot building on the 2.15-acre site and the demolition of the existing 30,921-square foot office building. The sketch plan shows 8-ground-level retail shops including a restaurant and 57 residential units proposed on the upper floors. These consist of 23 studio apartments, 34 one-bedroom apartments, and an amenity area.

The redevelopment site is situated in the township's BO-I Zoning district and is Tax Parcel #41-000-457-80-07. The development site is currently zoned BO-I – Business/Office Institutional. The most recent MCPC review of this site was in a sketch plan review memo to the township dated August 2, 2024. In this proposal the redevelopment plan showed two commercial pad sites with a retail and a restaurant space, both with a drive-thru.

RECOMMENDATION

The Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) generally supports the applicant's proposed sketch plan for the redevelopment of the site. However, during our review we have identified the following issues that the applicant and the township should consider in the development of the preliminary plan. Our comments are as follows:

REVIEW COMMENTS

1. **Proposed MU-VU Zoning District.** The tract is currently zoned BO-I: Business Office-Institutional, in which a residential development is not allowed as proposed by the applicant. Instead of this zoning, the applicant's sketch plan proposes the site's redevelopment using the MU-VU – Mixed Use Village Zoning District requirements. We support a mixed-use scenario to redevelop the site which lies at the corner of two major roadways and the intersection has primarily commercial land uses.

2. **Site Access**. The proposed County Line Road access proposed in the sketch plan shows a full turning movements (egress/ingress) within 230 feet of the Huntingdon Pike and County Line intersection. The existing access that limits left turns- right-in and right-out -- is a much safer and an appropriate arrangement near the intersection. The proposed movement would allow left turns into a dedicated left-turn aisle along County Line Road, which will put vehicles exiting the site in an unsafe situation. The applicant should be aware that both roadways are PennDOT roadways and a new Highway Occupancy Permit will be required for the redevelopment of the site.

3. **Mixed-Use Building:**

   a. *Architectural Façade* - We suggest that the façade both the rear and front be designed in a contextual manner that fits with the surrounding neighborhood. We suggest the massing, material selection and other architectural elements be an appropriate fit to the Sheffield Drive neighborhood that abuts the property. The sketch proposes a very shallow setback to this neighborhood and the township should consider element in its evaluation and ensure that architectural elevations and design appropriate to this setting are submitted for review.

   b. *Front Entry to Residential Lobby* - The site plan should provide a dedicated pull-off area, outside of the drive-aisle and near the building's residential lobby so that mini-buses and larger delivery vehicles are not blocking the driveway.

4. **Pedestrian Access and Mobility**:

   a. *Access from Sheffield Drive* - We recommend a dedicated pedestrian access route be established from Sheffield Drive sidewalk to connect with the redevelopment site with an improved sidewalk connection. This would give neighbors a safe pedestrian route to conveniently walk to and patronize the mixed-use development's retail shops and restaurants.

   b. *Sidewalks* - Dedicated sidewalk connections for pedestrians are needed from the sidewalks along both roadways to the front of the mixed-use building. Highly visible pavement markings are needed for the pedestrian crosswalks to ensure safe passage by pedestrians through the parking lot.

5. **Circulation and Parking Lot Arrangement**:

   a. *Dead-End Parking Arrangement* - The parking lot layout and vehicular circulation is made awkward by the two dead-end parking bays which have a total of 36 parking spaces. This is a large number of spaces to have devoted to dead-end bays. The sketch plan does not address the township's requirement for dead-end bays to have a 10-foot minimum back-up area at the end stalls of a parking area (Section 180-38.N.). The plan should be revised to provide for the required space.

b. *Parking Lot Arrangement* - The parking lot layout doesn't adequately account for the spaces needed in establishing the required islands for trees and the ADA parking lot spaces. The parking lot spaces shown will be reduced by the space needed for these required areas and for the service area needed for refuse trucks servicing the trash collection areas. The preliminary plan submission should take these spaces into consideration.

c. *Emergency Access* - The township may wish to consider an emergency access route leading from one of the dead-end parking bays and create an connection to Sheffield Drive for an emergency route.

6. **Landscape Elements and Design**:

a. *Parking Lot Tree Islands* - The sketch plan does not address many of the landscape requirements that pertain to the redevelopment of the site. Our review does not seek to outline all of these however several parking lot landscape requirements do have a direct bearing on the parking arrangement shown in the plan. The plan doesn't provide for the parking lot tree island and 1 ½" caliper tree for each 10 spaces in a double bay parking lot as required by Section 180-39.A. These should be considered and will impact the parking spaces shown in the sketch and the minimum required spaces to comply with the MU-VU District.

b. *Buffer for Residential Neighborhood along Stormwater Management Facilities* - We recommend the applicant ensure that the large evergreen trees that buffer the existing parking lot adjacent to Sheffield Drive are protected with the appropriate tree protection zone fencing and signage to ensure that the root zones of the large evergreen trees are not compromised in the redevelopment of the site.

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.

Sincerely,

Barry W. Jeffries

Barry W. Jeffries, ASLA, Senior Design Planner
610-278-3444 – barry.jeffries@montgomerycountypa.gov

C: Hightop Real Estate & Development LLC.
Craig R. Lewis Esquire, Applicant's Representative
Andrew Frey, Chrm., Twp. Planning Commission
John B. Rice, Twp. Solicitor
Timothy P. Woodrow, PE, Twp. Engineer

Attachments: A. Aerial of Site
B. Reduced Copy of Plan



3993 Huntingdon Pike
MCPC#240148003

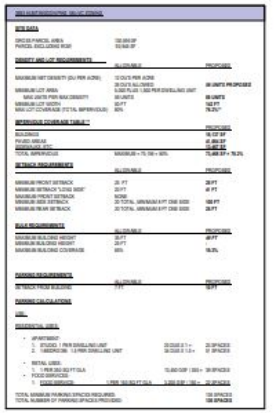
Montgomery County Planning Commission

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STUDIO HS4

ARCHITECTURAL SITE PLAN OPTION 07

SP.01.07