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Planning Commission

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Scott France, AICP
Executive Director

June 17, 2026

Ms. Jamie Worman, Assistant Township Manager
Lower Gwynedd Township
1130 North Bethlehem Pike, Box 625
Spring House, Pennsylvania 19477

Re: MCPC #24-0122-003
Name: Whitefield Homes
(8 lots/8 dus comprising 15.60 acres)
Situate: Sumneytown Pike (west)/Evans Road (south)
Lower Gwynedd Township

Dear Ms. Worman:

We have reviewed the above-referenced subdivision and land development plans in accordance with Section 502 of Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code," as you requested on June 1, 2026. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

Our office has received an updated set of plans for proposed improvements to a property (County Parcel ID 39-00-04054-00-2) located on Sumneytown Pike. The applicant, Whitefield Homes, LLC, is submitting a preliminary land development plan to divide a property at 1348 Sumneytown Pike in Lower Gwynedd Township into eight single-family residential lots. The proposed parcels range in size from about 47,000 square feet (1.09 acres) to roughly 125,000 square feet (2.88 acres). Access will be via an internal cul-de-sac road connecting to Sumneytown Pike, with cartway widths of 26 to 28 feet and a central turning area. Each lot features frontage and individual driveway access, with one lot designed as a flag lot. The plan also shows proposed site improvements, including stormwater management facilities with associated easements (a 15-foot-wide storm easement), a 20-foot-wide sanitary sewer easement, an 8-foot-wide crosswalk, and roughly 170 linear feet of retaining wall with a fence on proposed Lot 7.

As shown on the plan, several waivers are requested from the Lower Gwynedd Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) and Stormwater Management Ordinance to address site conditions and design limitations. The applicant's engineer requests exemptions from installing curb, widening the roadway, and dedicating the final right-of-way along Evans Road, as well as a waiver from providing sidewalks on this frontage. Additional requests include exemptions from regulations related to disturbing natural resource protection areas to allow driveway crossings within existing wetlands and associated site improvements. The applicant also seeks a modification to allow certain stormwater infrastructure, like roof drainage and yard drain piping, to be constructed with less than the minimum required diameter.

We previously reviewed the proposed subdivision plans for this property and submitted our feedback to the municipality on January 2, 2026. Our office generally supported the subdivision, considering it aligns with the Montco 2040 Comprehensive Plan, but we highlighted several areas needing revision before approval. Specifically, we pointed out deficiencies in the required flag lot buffer plantings and recommended additional landscaping to comply with ordinance standards and enhance lot separation.

The review highlighted the importance of safeguarding natural features, acknowledging that the revised plan lessens impacts compared to the original submission. It still advocates for better wetland protection, the development of a maintenance plan, and increased tree replacement and planting—especially near wetlands and along woodland edges—to boost habitat quality. The review also discussed stormwater management by endorsing surface basins and green infrastructure, recommended formal operations and maintenance agreements, and suggested designing basins and landscaping to look more natural. Finally, it emphasized the need to improve pedestrian connectivity, such as adding sidewalks along Sumneytown Pike to better link to nearby destinations.

RECOMMENDATION

The Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) supports this proposal; however, during our review, we found the following issues that the applicant and municipality may want to consider before final plan approval.

REVIEW COMMENTS

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT ISSUES

A. Proposed Underground Stormwater Management Facilities - The revised plan includes proposed underground stormwater management facilities on each lot. The proximity of these subsurface facilities to existing wetlands raises concerns about potential impacts on groundwater hydrology, including mounding and alterations to wetland hydroperiod, as well as the risk of pollutants migrating into groundwater-dependent systems. Because shallow seasonal high water tables may be present, the applicant should verify and demonstrate sufficient separation distances and provide an assessment of potential groundwater impacts. We leave it to the township engineer to determine if the plan properly addresses concerns related to hydrologic impacts, water quality risks, and construction effects.

DESIGN ISSUES

A. Pedestrian Connectivity - As mentioned in our previous review, MCPC recommends installing sidewalks along Sumneytown Pike, based on the guidance from our study, *MontcoPikes: A Vision Plan for 6 County Roads*. Although there are currently no sidewalks on neighboring properties and the area maintains a rural character, we suggest that municipal officials consider requiring sidewalks on the frontage of the subject property.

   Land development proposals offer valuable opportunities to gradually build a connected pedestrian network. As conditions change and additional development occurs, frontage improvements such as sidewalks can enhance safety and walkability, aligning with long-term planning goals. Installing sidewalks now sets a precedent for future growth and supports Lower Gwynedd's shift toward a more integrated multimodal transportation system.

WAIVER REQUESTS

A. Natural Resource Protection Standards - As indicated on the plan, relief is sought from the requirements set forth in §1230.48.C of the SALDO, which governs natural resource protection standards. As stated in this section, "*streams, watercourses, wetlands, ponds, lakes and areas within the one-hundred-year floodplain or designated floodplain soils . . . shall not be altered, regraded, developed, filled, piped, diverted or built upon except as allowed in the Lower Gwynedd Township Zoning Ordinance.*" This waiver is requested "to permit limited alteration of wetland areas for essential roadway and driveway crossings and site improvements."

MCPC highlights that driveway crossings of wetlands are problematic because they can impair the natural functions of these delicate ecosystems. Installing a driveway often requires fill, grading, and the creation of an impervious surface, which can alter wetland hydrology by blocking or rerouting water flow. This can result in localized flooding or drying. These crossings also affect water quality by increasing runoff, sediment, and pollutants, and by removing vegetation and fragmenting habitats for species that depend on wetlands. Such disruptions can lead to erosion, soil instability, and a reduced ability of the wetland to store floods and filter water. Even small crossings can have cumulative effects over time, especially when wetlands are connected or already stressed.

CONCLUSION

We reiterate that MCPC generally supports this application; however, we recommend that the township consider the issues raised in this letter.

Please note that the review comments and recommendations in this report are advisory to the municipality, and final disposition on 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 before 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 (24-0122-003) on any plans submitted for final recording.

Sincerely,

Kevin Chavous

Kevin Chavous, ASLA, SITES AP, LEED AP, WELL AP, CNU-A, AICP CUD
Design Planner II
610.278.3731 e-mail kevin.chavous@montgomerycountypa.gov

c: Whitefield Homes, LLC, Applicant
Bohler Engineering, Applicant's Engineer
Mimi Gleason, Township Manager
Craig Melograno, Chairman, Township Planning Commission
Neil Stein, Esq., Township Solicitor

Attachments: A) Aerial View of Site
B) Reduced Copy of Applicant's Plan



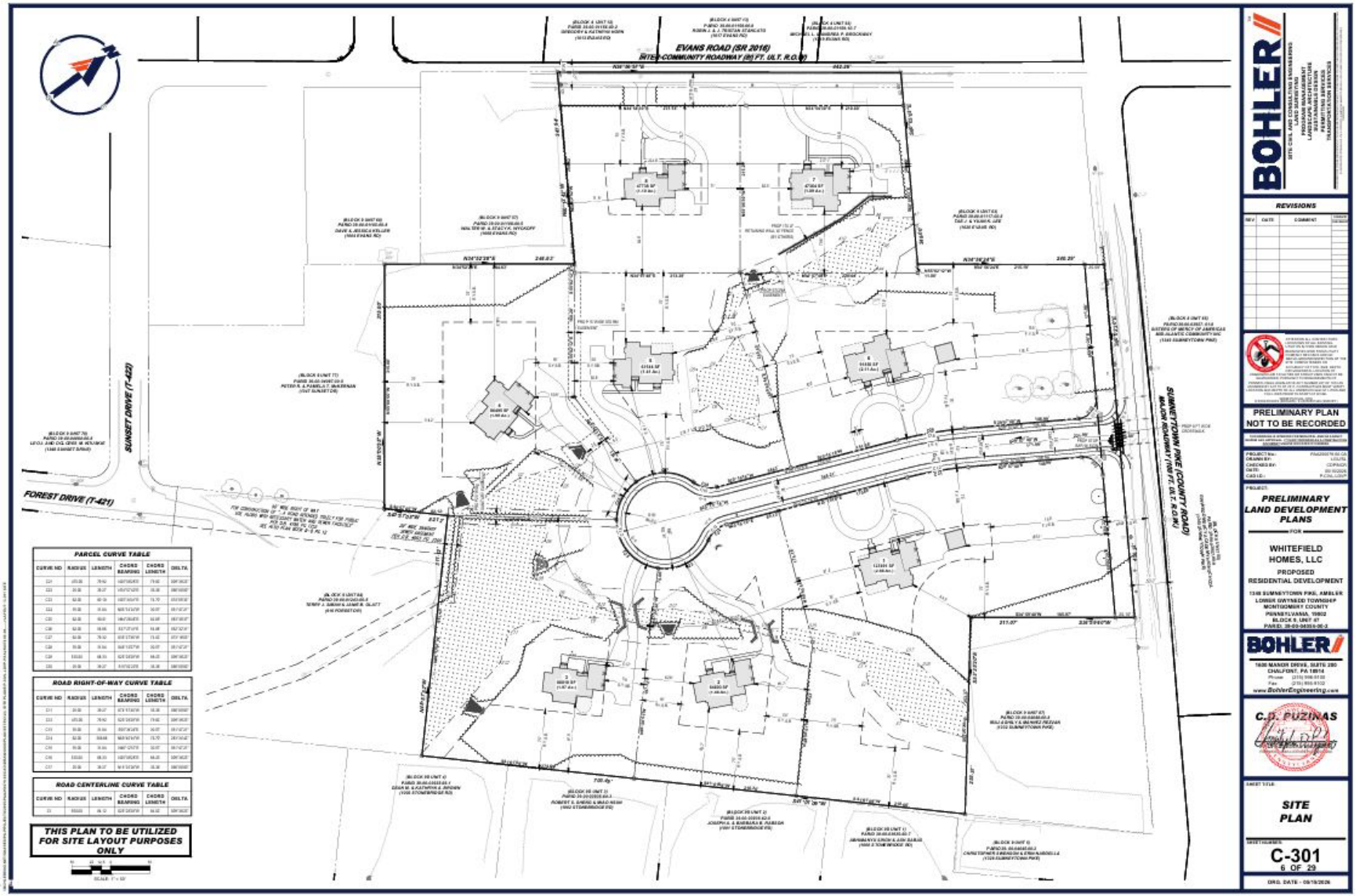
Whitefield Homes
MCPC#240122003

Montgomery County Planning Commission

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Aerial photography provided by Nearmap


EVANS ROAD (SR 2016)
SUNSET DRIVE (T-422)
FOREST DRIVE (T-421)
SUMNEYTOWN PIKE (COUNTY ROAD)
PARCEL CURVE TABLE
ROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY CURVE TABLE
ROAD CENTERLINE CURVE TABLE
THIS PLAN TO BE UTILIZED FOR SITE LAYOUT PURPOSES ONLY
BOHLER
REVISIONS
PRELIMINARY PLAN NOT TO BE RECORDED
PRELIMINARY LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS
WHITEFIELD HOMES, LLC
PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
1348 SUMNEYTOWN PIKE, AMBLER
LOWER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA, 19002
BLOCK 9, UNIT 67
PARCEL 35-00-34359-00-3
1635 MANOR DRIVE, SUITE 200
CHALFONT, PA 18914
C.D. PUZINAS
SITE PLAN
C-301
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