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MONTGOMERY COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION

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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

February 23, 2024

Peter Hiryak, Township Manager
Douglass Township
1350 E. Philadelphia Ave
Gilbertsville, PA 19525

Re: MCPC 24-0025-001
Plan Name: 749 Congo Road
(26 lots comprising 58 acres)
Situate: Congo Road and Lisenbeidler Road
Douglass Township

Dear Mr. Hiryak,

We have reviewed the above-referenced subdivision in accordance with Section 609 of Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code," as you requested on January 29, 2024. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

CRDT Development, LLC is proposing to subdivide an existing 58-acre parcel at 749 Congo Road into 26 lots, each to contain a single-family detached dwelling. The development will be served by public water and sewer. The property is located in the R-1 Agricultural Residential zoning district, and the applicant is proposing a residential cluster development. Average lot size is proposed to be 23,666 square feet. There are three open space areas proposed which include an internal pathway network and a primary park with a gazebo for a total of 40.69 acres to be owned by an HOA. The current s-curve on Congo Road is proposed to be turned into a T-intersection. The applicant is requesting a number of waivers related to sidewalks, widening Congo Road, filtering buffers, emergency access, and select stormwater management requirements. The site contains a floodplain which will be incorporated into Open Space C. The plans are dated December 12, 2023.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

The proposal is generally consistent with Montgomery County's Comprehensive Plan, *Montco 2040: A Shared Vision*. The property is located in an area identified as a Rural Resource Area in the Future Land Use Plan of the County's Comprehensive Plan. Primary uses in this area include low-density residential development that is clustered or has a rural character.

The proposal is generally consistent with the Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Comprehensive Plan. The property is located in a conservation area, and while residential development is not intended for these areas, if proposed, significant areas of common protected open space shall be a major part of any new development. Protected open spaces should be the dominant feature of any new residential development and should prioritize conservation of environmental resources like wetlands, woodlands, and stream corridors.

RECOMMENDATION

The Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) generally supports the applicant's proposal, however, in the course of our review we have identified the following issues that the applicant and Douglass Township may wish to consider prior to preliminary plan approval. Our comments are as follows:

REVIEW COMMENTS

SIDEWALK, TRAIL, AND ROADWAY CONFIGURATION

1. It should be clarified on the plan how the intersection of Road A and Congo Road will function. We recommend that the applicant coordinate with the township's traffic engineer on the T intersection.
2. The applicant is requesting a waiver from providing sidewalks along the frontage of lots 21-26 and open space areas A and B (Section 424.1.A – Sidewalk Location, Design, and Construction). We recommend that sidewalks be installed in these areas to connect those dwellings to the trail and open space areas. In addition, the sidewalk on the eastern side of Road A dead-ends at Lot 20. We recommend that it continue on both sides of Road A to the entrance of the site to enhance pedestrian connectivity.
3. We recommend that it be clarified on the plans whether crosswalks will be installed.
4. We recommend that the trail traversing the proposed subdivision be open to the public, in particular as residents of the subdivision further north on Congo Road may wish to use it to connect to the township-owned Congo Road Open Space. We recommend that an access easement be included for the trail so that non-residents can use it.

LANDSCAPING AND OPEN SPACE

1. Section 420-1.A.4 of the township's landscape ordinance requires that the planting schedule list includes the quantity of each species proposed. There are many areas in the proposed plan where ten or more of the same species are proposed to be planted in a row. We recommend that fewer of the same species be planted in a row to ensure greater resiliency to disease.
2. Section 420-7.A.2 outlines requirements for naturalized ground cover plant species for the floors and slopes of stormwater basins. We recommend that the proposed basins be naturalized with plantings and that additional plantings be added to the back of lots 14 – 20 and 10-13, as a transition and buffer to the basins.
3. We recommend that the applicant specify a management plan for the open space areas, stipulating how the former farm fields will be initially planted and managed over the first five years. Former farm fields are prone to invasive species, so we recommend a management plan be established to prevent invasive species establishment.

CONCLUSION

We wish to reiterate that MCPC generally supports the applicant's proposal but we believe that our suggested revisions will better achieve Douglass Township's planning objectives for residential development.

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 (24-0025-001) on any plans submitted for final recording.

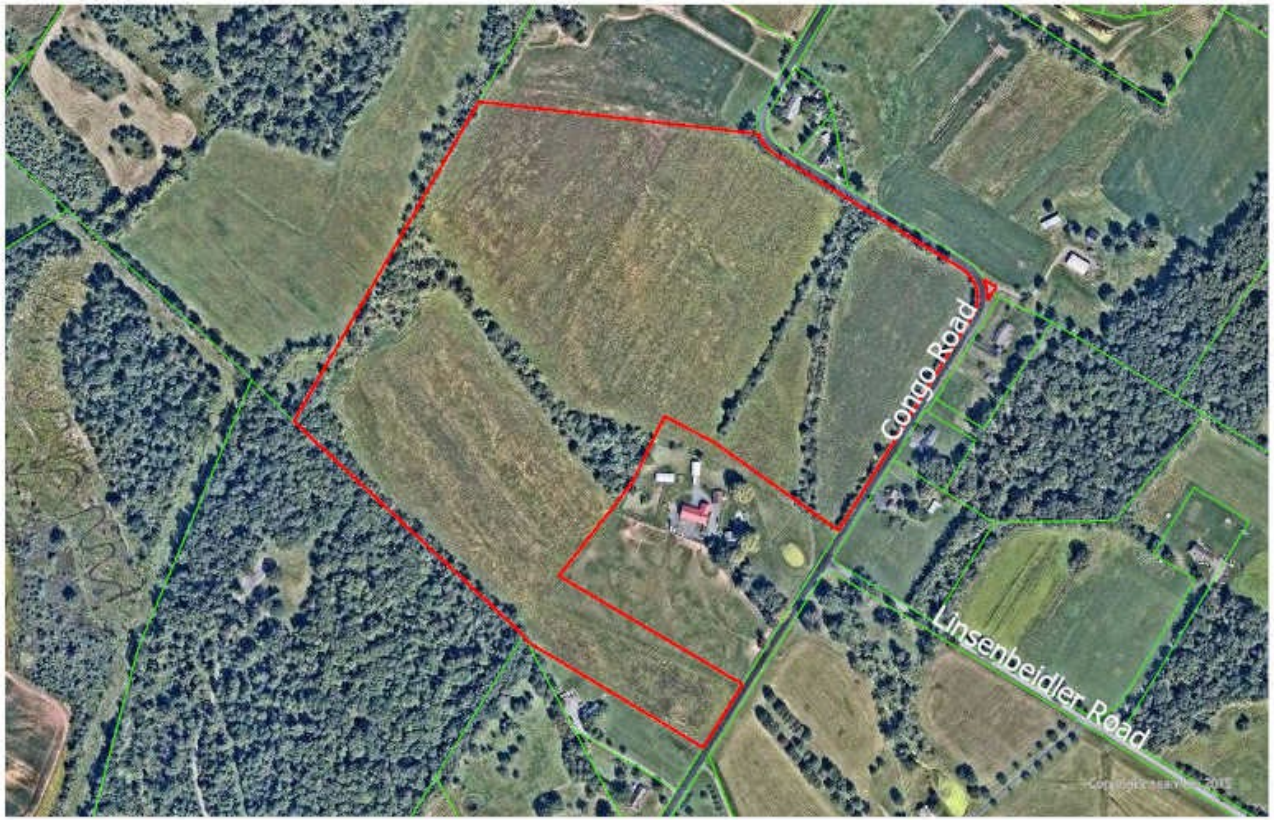
Sincerely,

Naomi Crimm, Senior Planner
naomi.crimm@montgomerycountypa.gov – 610-278-3748

c: CRDT Development, LLC
Nick Feola, Bursich Associates
Edward Reitz, Jr., Douglass Planning Agency
Blake Dunbar, Township Solicitor
Allison Lee, Township Engineer

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

ATTACHMENTS A & B

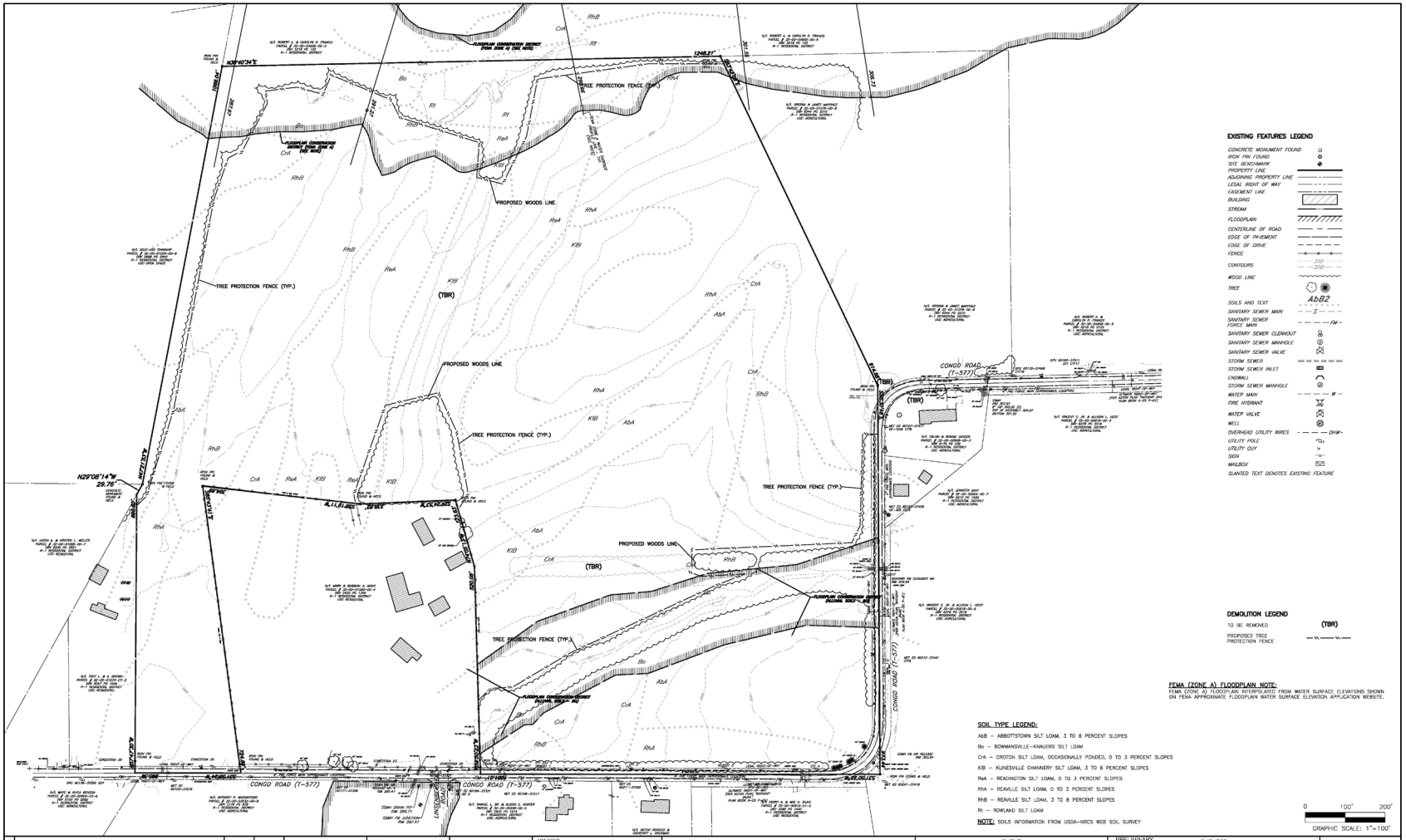


749 Congo Road
MCPC#240025001

Montgomery County Planning Commission

0 200 400 800 Feet

N


EXISTING FEATURES LEGEND
CONCRETE MONUMENT FOUND
IRON PIN FOUND
SITE BENCHMARK
PROPERTY LINE
ADJOINING PROPERTY LINE
LEGAL RIGHT OF WAY
EASEMENT LINE
BUILDING
STREAM
FLOODPLAIN
CENTERLINE OF ROAD
EDGE OF PAVEMENT
EDGE OF DRIVE
FENCE
CONTOURS
WOOD LINE
TREE
SOILS AND TEXT
SANITARY SEWER MAIN
SANITARY SEWER FORCE MAIN
SANITARY SEWER CLEANOUT
SANITARY SEWER MANHOLE
SANITARY SEWER VALVE
STORM SEWER
STORM SEWER INLET
ENDWALL
STORM SEWER MANHOLE
WATER MAIN
FIRE HYDRANT
WATER VALVE
WELL
OVERHEAD UTILITY WIRES
UTILITY POLE
UTILITY GUY
SIGN
MAILBOX
SLANTED TEXT DENOTES EXISTING FEATURE
DEMOLITION LEGEND
TO BE REMOVED (TBR)
PROPOSED TREE PROTECTION FENCE
FEMA (ZONE A) FLOODPLAIN NOTE:
FEMA (ZONE A) FLOODPLAIN INTERPOLATED FROM WATER SURFACE ELEVATIONS SHOWN ON FEMA APPROXIMATE FLOODPLAIN WATER SURFACE ELEVATION APPLICATION WEBSITE.
SOIL TYPE LEGEND:
AbB – ABBOTTSTOWN SILT LOAM, 3 TO 8 PERCENT SLOPES
Bo – BOWMANSVILLE-KNAUERS SILT LOAM
CrA – CROTON SILT LOAM, OCCASIONALLY PONDED, 0 TO 3 PERCENT SLOPES
KIB – KLINESVILLE CHANNERY SILT LOAM, 3 TO 8 PERCENT SLOPES
ReA – READINGTON SILT LOAM, 0 TO 3 PERCENT SLOPES
RhA – REAVILLE SILT LOAM, 0 TO 3 PERCENT SLOPES
RhB – REAVILLE SILT LOAM, 3 TO 8 PERCENT SLOPES
Rt – ROWLAND SILT LOAM
NOTE: SOILS INFORMATION FROM USDA-NRCS WEB SOIL SURVEY
GRAPHIC SCALE: 1"=100'
TREE PROTECTION FENCE (TYP.)
PROPOSED WOODS LINE
CONGO ROAD (T-577)
LANCASTER ROAD
(TBR)
BURSICH ASSOCIATES
ENGINEERS, LAND SURVEYORS, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
2121 EAST MAIN STREET
POTTSTOWN, PA 19464
610.323.4040
www.bursich.com
CLIENT
CRDT DEVELOPMENT, LLC
2965 WEST GERMANTOWN PIKE
NORRISTOWN, PA 19403
PRELIMINARY
EXISTING FEATURES & DEMOLITION PLAN
SUBJECT
749 CONGO ROAD SUBDIVISION
DOUGLASS TOWNSHIP, MONTGOMERY COUNTY , PENNSYLVANIA
JOB NO. 228255.00
SHEET NO. 3 OF 34
DWG. NO. EC-01
MANAGER NEF
DESIGN NEF
CHKD. BY
DRAFT DPC
CHKD. BY
FILE MK-03
DATE 12-12-23
NOTES
SCALE
NO. REVISION DATE BY
SEAL
SEAL